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THE

BOOK OF PSALMS

WITH AN

Explanatory and Critical Commentary,

BY

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DEAN OF WELLS.

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HON. CANON OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD, AND VICAR OF WINKFIELD, BERKS.

F. C. COOK, M.A.,
CANON AND PRECENTOR OF EXETER, CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO THE QUEEN.

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NOTICE.

THE COMMENTARY AND NOTES UPON THE PSALMS by the Very Rev. Dean Johnson, Rev. Canon Elliott, and Rev. Canon Cook, have been received with so great approbation and have excited so much interest, that the publisher has thought himself justified in complying with the requests of many correspondents, by printing them in a separate volume for wider circulation. The volume has undergone such revision by the authors as was required, before sending it to press.

October, 1880.

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PSALMS.

INTRODUCTION.

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§ 1. *Introductory Remarks.*

NO portion of the Hebrew Scriptures has transfused its spirit into the Christian Church more completely than the book of Psalms[1]. The first Christians seem to have found in it an adequate expression of their deepest feelings[2]. Eliciting its spiritual meanings, and interpreting its doctrinal teaching under the light of a perfect revelation, they adopted the Psalter as the foundation and the model of their devotions, retaining its most striking characteristics for many centuries in their hymnody[3]. Thus too in the churches of the East and of the West, from the time of their separation to the present day, all lyrical expression of religious thought and feeling seems, so to speak, an echo or adaptation of the strains of the "sweet Psalmist of Israel."

For this result there are obvious and sufficient reasons. Of the book of Job it has been observed that it differs remarkably from all other productions of the Hebrew mind: of the Psalter, on the contrary, it is true that it exhibits more fully and exactly than any book the peculiar characteristics of the Israelites. It represents a spiritual state, which, with all its grave defects, was

[1] As an illustration it may be observed that the total number of direct quotations from the Old Testament in the New is 283; of these 116 are from the psalter. A similar proportion is found in citations by most of the early Fathers.

[2] Christian education in Syria began with the psalms. Thus Assem. T. III. p. 7. 937, "Tirones primum psalmos Davidicos legant; deinde Novum Testamentum, mox Vetus."

[3] A full account of the use of psalms and hymns in the early Church is given by Bingham, Vol. IV. p. 420—472. See also Rheinwald, 'Die Kirchliche Archäologie,' § 96. The earliest extant hymn of the Christian Church is that of Clement of Alexandria, 'Pæd.' 5. 12, p. 311, ed. Potter. Like the hymns noticed by Pliny, 'Ep.' 97, it is an act of adoration to the Son of God.

singularly susceptible to religious impressions, capable of receiving and reproducing communications from a higher sphere. Nor is there any book in ancient literature, profane or sacred, which shews so wide and perfect a sympathy with man in his weakness, and in his strength, in his joy, and in his sufferings. Deep humility and oneness of mind with the poor are traits, of which scarcely a shadow is found in the lyrical poetry of those Gentile nations, which attained the highest degree of culture: as expressed in this book they present a direct contrast to the characteristics of Hellenic genius. The Psalmists one and all, but none so perfectly as David, to whom the book owes its traditional title, while opening their own heart with all its depths of agony and earnestness of aspiration, give full expression to the yearnings of mankind. We find, however, throughout a combination of feelings elsewhere unknown, or imperfectly developed; a deep sense of inherent sin and unworthiness, together with a consciousness of integrity in purpose and intent; a full recognition of a standard of morals and holiness, so perfect as to involve the condemnation of the sinner, yet withal a loving trust in the mercy and grace of the lawgiver and judge: in short a true preparation for the special work of Christ.

And independently of these characteristics, which attract the spiritual instinct, the book is full of interest to men of every form of intellectual culture. The scholar and the poet, the philosopher and the historian, find in it ample materials for thoughtful study. Connected probably by one psalm (Ps. xc) with the dawn of the national life, its most important compositions belong to the period when that life was fully developed; when it rose by a single bound to the summit of power and real greatness, from which indeed it speedily declined, but which left undying reminiscences in the national mind. Upon that epoch, and on its productions, David has set his royal seal. His character, singularly gifted, stands out in vivid portraiture, in its light and in its dark shadows; forcing an interest by turns of admiration and sympathy, of anxiety and surprise. And second only to the great national hero, men of genius, Solomon, Asaph and the Korahites, record the feelings of the best portion of the people through the varying phases of their fortunes; the splendour of the Solomonian age, the long years of chequered vicissitudes which intervened between that period and the Babylonian captivity, the deep depression and intense yearnings of the exiled people, and their mingled sorrows and gladness after their partial restoration. At each period questions of permanent interest touching the destinies of man, and the relative claims of morality and religion, are discussed, if not finally settled: nor has poetry of any age shewn a fuller appreciation of nature in all its moods, in its majesty and in its sweetness, in its terrors and in its repose: thronged, as it were, with multitudinous forms of life, the atmosphere in which the Hebrew lyrist[1] moves is bright with one all-pervading light, which gives a meaning and an object to them all.

No book has been so fully commented on: the literature of the psalms makes up a library. Nearly all the great Fathers of the Church have contributed volumes of exposition. They were chiefly concerned with the spiritual and practical bearings, and laboured for the most part under the disadvantage of ignorance of the Hebrew, and disregard both of the literal meaning and historical connection, yet special interest attaches to their labours: their minds are in real inner sympathy with the Psalmists; and with the quick apprehension of Greeks and Latins developed by careful training, such men as Origen, Eusebius, Basil and Chrysostom, Hilary, Ambrose and Augustine, readily seized the clues to the sequence of thought and feeling. Jerome, however, stands out among them as the true father of exegetical and critical commentary. The interpretation of the psalter owes more to him than scholars are wont to recognize: he combined a fair knowledge of Hebrew with an acute judgment and strong practical sense. Mediæval Christianity did good service in its way; but, following closely in the track of the Fathers, it effected little for the exe-

[1] Compare Euripides, 'Medea,' 826—830.

gesis and criticism of the psalter. With the reformation came a new epoch of light and life. Mercer and Calvin, entering at once with vigour upon the study of Hebrew, took a place which subsequent labours have not superseded: in fact a literature so copious soon sprang up that, continued and amplified by a succession of industrious critics, among whom Rudinger, Venema and Agellius hold the foremost place, it threatened to become useless from its very extent. We owe to Rosenmüller a full and judicious presentation of the most important results of previous labours, including those of Rabbinical writers, especially Rashi, Aben-Ezra, and Kimchi, together with a well-considered, and on the whole a satisfactory, comment. Within the last few years numbers of able critics have bestowed great and successful labour upon the book. In Germany much has been done for the historical exegesis, and still more for the grammatical and philological elucidation of the psalms. The work of Hengstenberg, though somewhat defective in judgment, well deserves the high position which it holds in England and Germany. Delitzsch, inferior to no commentator in ability, and superior to most in oriental and general learning, combines a warm and deep sympathy with a keen appreciation of the Psalmists' tone of thought. Ewald brings his singular power of insight to bear upon difficult questions of interpretation; though his attempt to construct an historical sequence on internal evidence is generally and justly regarded as a failure[1]. The commentary of Hupfeld would approach near to excellence, were his historical and religious instincts on a par with his acute discernment in matters of philology and criticism. Hitzig holds a place of his own, deservedly high; but, though helpful to the scholar, he is wholly unsafe as a guide to the student. The brief commentary of Köster is chiefly useful for the light it throws on the structure of the psalms (see Appendix): that of Moll in Lange's 'Bibelwerk' is accurate, full of interesting information, and written in a devout and reverent spirit. In England the commentary of Mr Perowne is valuable both for its intrinsic merit, and as presenting in a readable form the results of German criticism, especially as developed by Hupfeld; that of Dr Kay is remarkable for independent research, and that of Bishop Wordsworth for varied and profound erudition. The late Dr Mill bestowed great labour upon this book; but the results have not been published. Among other commentaries accessible to English readers, those of Dr Phillips, Dr Jebb, and Canon Hawkins may be consulted with advantage; and special value must be attached to the 'Introduction to the Study and Use of the Psalms' by the late Rev. J. F. Thrupp.

§ 2. *Title.*

The general Hebrew title of the books is Tehillim, "praises," or "songs of praise;" or Sepher Tehillim, "book of praises[2]." This title, though open to

[1] The results of this attempt have been set before the English public by four scholars, who have divested it of much of its apparent harshness, and commended it by a graceful translation, and notes remarkable for conciseness and point. See 'The Psalms Chronologically Arranged, &c.,' by Four Friends, 2nd ed. 1870. But, as a matter of fact, it is certain that those results are far from approving themselves to Ewald's countrymen, none differing from him more widely in detail than those whose theological prepossessions come nearest to his own. The calm dispassionate judgment of Köster is that "Ewald's attempt to arrange the psalms in chronological order cannot lead to any positive results, a fact sufficiently shewn by the astounding divergences of hypotheses touching the age of the psalms," see 'Die Psalmen,' p. 7, note. And again (p. 15), "the extraordinary discrepancy between the historical interpretations of the psalter is of itself a strong warning (Warnungszeichen) not to mix up insecure hypotheses with what can be historically proved."

[2] תהלים, or תהלין, contracted to תלים or תלין, transcribed by Philo and Jerome, and commonly by early Christian writers, as tillim tillin, tilli. The Masora uses the plural Sepher tehilloth, and the name Hallêla, but only in reference to one group of psalms, cxiii. to cxix. The word Shir (שיר), nearly equivalent to song, whether sacred or profane, expressing generally a festive or joyous feeling, occurs in the inscriptions of some psalms, but it is not used in the plural, nor is it applied to the whole book. At the close of Ps. lxxii. תפלות (tephilloth), "prayers," is used as the general designation of the preceding psalms which are assigned to David. This might naturally have had the preference as describing the devotional character of the psalms. In the singular it occurs as the inscription of the xviith psalm (where see note), and in the later books, as that of the lxxxvi, xc, cii, and cxlii: as also of the Song of Hannah.

objection as not being universally applicable, yet correctly and fairly expresses the great characteristic of the book, of which the supreme object is to declare the glory of God. The title by which it is designated in the New Testament, Luke xx. 42; Acts i. 20, and in all Christian versions, viz. ψαλμοί, "Psalms," or collectively, "Psalter," ψαλτήριον, is derived, through the Latin Vulgate, from the Alexandrian or Septuagint Version: the word corresponds in meaning to a title prefixed to several psalms (*e.g.* iii. iv. v. vi), in Hebrew *mizmor* (מִזְמוֹר). It refers rather to the form, as a poem to be sung with a musical accompaniment, than to the spirit, or religious character of the compositions; still it is a term which applies equally to all, and it expresses the connection with liturgical services, while any original deficiency in spiritual significance has been supplied by its association with the devotions of the Church.

§ 3. *Division.*

The psalter is divided into five books, each of which is distinctly marked by a doxology at the close; that at the end of the fifth differing from the others only in extent. This division is of great antiquity, certainly older than the Alexandrian Version: the doxologies may have been added when the collection of the whole, or of a considerable portion, sc. of the first two books, was completed. The resemblance between this division and that of the Pentateuch has been long since remarked, as by Hippolytus and Epiphanius ('De Mens. et Pond.' c. 6). Thus, too, in the Hebrew Midrash on Ps. i. 1: "Moses gave the five books of the law to the Israelites, and, as a counterpart to them, David gave the psalms consisting of five books." It is important as bearing independent testimony to the antiquity of the corresponding division of the Mosaic work. Delitzsch supposes that it may point to an internal harmony between the fivefold enunciation of the law, and the fivefold response of the national heart; a suggestion which, though somewhat fanciful, rests upon a just appreciation of the characteristics of the Pentateuch and the Psalter, which together complete the representation of the principles and feelings of the ancient Church.

Each of these five books has very distinct characteristics. The first contains 41 psalms: one of these is introductory, and may have been prefixed together with the second, when the original collection was made, not improbably by Solomon himself, or by one of the School of Levites: two others, the 10th and 33rd, have no inscription; the 10th, as it would seem, being a continuation of the 9th psalm; the 33rd, for some unknown reason, it may be by an accident in transcription: thirty-seven are assigned to David; an assignment which, as will be shewn in the following notes, is in most cases sufficiently justified by internal evidence. The name Jehovah is used constantly, though not exclusively, throughout this book.

The second book has thirty-one psalms, xlii—lxxii. The first seven are attributed to the sons of Korah, or eight, if we include the 43rd—which, however, is a second part of the 42nd: one, the 50th, to Asaph; eighteen to David; two are anonymous, lxvi. lxvii (see notes); and one is ascribed to Solomon. In this book the inscriptions are remarkable for the general fulness of the historical notices. The name Elohim occurs so frequently as to be a marked characteristic. The doxology at the close of Ps. lxxii. combines the two names, Elohim and Jehovah, in a form which may possibly have been intended to point out the characteristics of both books.

The third book, of much less extent, contains but seventeen psalms, lxxiii—lxxxix. Eleven are attributed to Asaph; four to the sons of Korah, interrupted, however, by Ps. lxxxvi, which is entitled "A prayer of David;" one of the four, lxxxviii, bears also the name of Heman; one, lxxxix, that of Ethan. The liturgical character of this book is marked by musical terms in the inscriptions. As will be shewn in the notes, the historical references are weighty and numerous. The divine names Jehovah and Elohim are used with nearly equal frequency.

The fourth book has seventeen psalms, xc—cvi. One bears the name of Moses; ten are anonymous; the last five are

ascribed to David. The name Jehovah is used throughout.

The fifth book is the largest in extent, containing forty-four psalms, cvii—cl: the first is anonymous, the three following (cviii—cx) are attributed to David; three are anonymous, and have the word "Hallelujah" in place of an inscription; six are without name or inscription (cxiv—cxix); fifteen (cxx—cxxxiv) are called Songs of Degrees, of which one (cxxvii) is ascribed to Solomon, two (cxxxi, cxxxiii) to David; one, cxxxv, is called "Hallelujah," A Psalm of Praise, and the two following are anonymous; eight (cxxxviii—cxlv) bear the name of David; the last four begin each with the Hallelujah, and form a complete doxology. The name Jehovah predominates, but not to the exclusion of Elohim; the proportion is fairly represented in the closing psalm, in which Jehovah occurs twice, and Elohim once.

On the formation of the psalter, see § 14.

§ 4. *Authorship.*

The first question which presents itself, and to which all others touching the origin and form of this collection are subordinate, touches the authorship of the several psalms. From the preceding analysis it will be seen that the old and canonical tradition of the Hebrews assigns more than two-thirds to authors: seventy-three to David, two to Solomon, twelve to Asaph, twelve to the sons of Korah, one to Ethan, and one to Moses. Forty-nine are anonymous.

If, therefore, the authority of the inscriptions were admitted, the question so far as regards one hundred and one psalms would be settled; but serious doubts have been raised, and are still entertained, by critics; and we have to inquire, first, what grounds there are for impugning or maintaining that authority; and secondly, what kind or degree of evidence is supplied by an independent examination of the psalms.

It is scarcely necessary to dwell upon the much later, but very prevalent, tradition which assigned the whole psalter to David. It is true that the psalms are quoted in the New Testament under the name of David, but it is admitted that this title merely bears witness to the customary language of the Hebrews in our Lord's time, and is justified by the axiom, "a potiore fit nominatio." There are indications of such a usage in the second Book of Chronicles (xxiii. 18), where the psalmody of the temple is assigned in general terms to David, either as the orderer, or, as the Hebrew[1] probably signifies, the chief composer. From a notice in the 2nd Maccabees (ii. 13) it is evident that at that time the psalter was known as the Book of David (τὰ τοῦ Δαυίδ), and that the collection, bearing this general title, was believed to have been completed by Nehemiah. Rabbinical writers generally[2], and many Christian Fathers, accepted this title without hesitation or inquiry. At present no theologians consider it as a tenable position: indeed they could not do so without disregarding plain statements, not only in the inscriptions, but in numerous psalms.

§ 5. *On the Inscriptions.*

Before we consider the objections raised against the inscriptions in general, attention may be called to these points. (1) It was to be expected a priori that lyrical compositions would bear some inscription, designating the author. Each of the psalms or metrical compositions in the Pentateuch has some distinct notice both of the author, and of the circumstances under which it was produced. See Gen. iv. 23, xlix. 1, 2; Exod. xv. 1; Deut. xxxi. 30, xxxiii. 1. Thus too in Judges, the Song of Deborah; in Samuel, the hymn of Hannah (Judg. v. 1; 1 S. ii. 1); the lamentation of David, 2 S. i. 17; his pæan, &c., ch. xxii. 1, and his last words, ch. xxiii. 1, have special and complete inscriptions.

The Song of Hezekiah again, although it occurs in the middle of a book, where the context sufficiently explains the occasion, has a formal inscription, resembling those which are prefixed to many of the psalms, viz. "the writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, when he had been sick and was recovered of his sickness." Isai. xxxviii. 9. Such, more-

[1] על ידי דויד, lit. by the hands of David, which may mean as appointed by David, or as composed by him.

[2] Talmud, 'Pesachim,' c. x.

over, was the all but invariable custom of the prophets, not only as a general heading of their predictions, but for detached portions, especially those of a lyrical character, which were intended for separate recitation, as for instance, Isai. ii. 1, xiii. 1; Habakkuk iii. 1. In fact, it would be less difficult to account for the presence of a distinct title, than for the omission of one, in those psalms, which on that account the Talmudists call "orphans," or fatherless.

(2) Again, there is no probability that a title once given by the author, or the first collector, would be intentionally changed. It was not the custom of antiquity to invent, or materially to alter, such designations. Errors of transcription, omissions or displacements might occur; but all ancient nations, the Hebrews more especially, had a religious reverence for traditions touching the great names of their ancestors: what they received they transmitted, to the best of their power intact and unchanged, to their children.

We must, however, bear in mind that, useful and important as these inscriptions may be, they are by no means indispensable: the subject-matter of the psalms, their doctrinal and practical bearings, may be elicited without such aid: and critics of very different schools have admitted that the authenticity or accuracy of each inscription may be fearlessly discussed without impugning the authority of Holy Writ. The variations of the inscriptions in the Septuagint and other ancient versions sufficiently prove that they were not regarded as fixed portions of the Canon, and that they were open to conjectural emendation: on the other hand, the fact that they were to a great extent unintelligible to the writers of the LXX. is a conclusive evidence of their antiquity.

The first suggestion of doubt appears to have been made by Theodorus of Mopsuestia, a man of great ability, whose latitudinarian tendencies were shewn in far more important questions. Since the publication of a treatise by Vogel[1], the general tendency of German criticism until very lately has been unfavourable to the authority of the titles. Some of the ablest critics disregard them altogether. Hupfeld holds them to be wholly worthless, for the most part mere conjectures of uncritical collectors. On the other hand, their general trustworthiness and value are firmly maintained by German critics certainly equal in learning and honesty of purpose to their opponents, as for instance, Hengstenberg, Tholuck, Keil, and Delitzsch, whose work 'Symbolæ ad Psalmos illustrandos isagogicæ,' 1846, has a standard value. Critics again, who occupy a middle position, while admitting the force of objections in the case of certain psalms, unhesitatingly reject the sweeping conclusions of Hupfeld and his party. Thus Bleek holds that in the case of many inscriptions there is conclusive evidence of very great antiquity, especially in reference to events which are either not recorded, or differently related, in the historical books. Moll again, one of the very latest (1869) and ablest commentators, asserts, that on the whole the result of laborious research has issued in a far more favourable estimate of the age and character of these inscriptions.

At present we may confine our inquiry to the authorship of those psalms, which bear the names of the writers, more especially those which are ascribed to David: proceeding in the first place to a consideration of the internal characteristics.

§ 6. *Characteristics of David's Psalms.*

A considerable number of the psalms are recognized by critics, with very few exceptions, as belonging severally to distinct periods in David's personal history. They have peculiarities of thought and style, which go far towards determining both the authorship, and the date; they abound in allusions to local or temporary circumstances; and they indicate progressive stages in the development of a character, which stands alone in its combination of vigour, dignity, and grace.

§ 7. *Psalms of the first period of David's life.*

The following may be ascribed, some without hesitation, others with a high degree of probability, both on the evidence of the ancient inscriptions, and on that of internal indications, to the period

[1] The work is quoted by Moll in Lange's 'Bibelwerk,' 'Inscriptiones psalmorum serius demum additas videri,' 1767.

of his youth, or early manhood, first at the court of Saul, then during his exile, whether in the wilderness, among the Philistines, at Gath, or Ziklag, up to the close of Saul's reign.

vii. viii. (?) xi. xii. xiii. xvi. (?) xvii. xxii. xxiii. (?) xxxiv. xxxv. lii. liv. lvi. lvii. lix.

The most striking characteristics recognized for the most part by critics in those psalms, which they severally accept as belonging to this period, may be classified under the following heads.

1. Consciousness of innocence. This feeling is more strongly expressed in the early psalms of David than in any Hebrew composition: it continues unbroken up to his great fall; after that crisis it is never found without some distinct limitation, as a relative innocence, with reference to accusations of his enemies, or to the discharge of public duties. It occurs in broad general terms in those psalms which are admitted to be the earliest of his extant poems; he describes himself as "upright in heart," vii. 10, xi. 2; as righteous and loved by the "righteous Lord," xi. 7. This righteousness he specially dwells upon as thoroughly tested, tried and approved by God, to Whom he directly appeals as a witness of his integrity, cf. vii. 3, 8, 9. He describes himself as just to all, not only kind to his friends, but actively beneficent to his enemies, vii. 4, xxxv. 13, 14: and he attributes his persecutions to malice unprovoked by any fault or iniquity, vii. 3—5.

2. This feeling is connected with intense devotion, shewn especially in absolute trust. The first word in both psalms, which critics regard as his earliest productions, is an expression of trust; vii. 1, "O Lord my God, in Thee do I put my trust;" xi. 1, "In the Lord put I my trust." Compare the psalms which the inscriptions assign to this period; at Gath, lvi. 4 and 11; in the cave, lvii. 1; and on the night before his flight, lix. 9, 10, 17. This feeling indeed is not peculiar to the early psalms, but in them it is specially associated with consciousness of freedom from guilt.

3. A strong sense of personal dignity. The first expression of this feeling occurs in the seventh psalm: David already speaks of his "honour," *v.* 5; the word is very strong in Hebrew, implying dignity and weight; it occurs frequently in his later psalms, when it refers generally to his kingly rank: but the feeling of personal nobleness is characteristic of David: from his first entrance on public life he knew himself to be a peculiar object of divine favour, with a high and special vocation, and he felt in himself powers and gifts (which, however, he is careful to attribute to God's love, see xviii. 32—36), such as would enable him to perform the work entrusted to him. No similar feeling is shewn by any other Psalmist, nor, to the same extent, by other Hebrew writers. It is in fact the consciousness of an election, which marked David from youth onward as a type of the Messiah.

4. This feeling again is connected with others, which appertain partly to David's earnest and impulsive temperament, partly to an early and imperfect stage in the development of ethical and spiritual principles. The Hebrews generally felt and expressed bitter enmity towards those by whom they were harshly and unjustly treated; but by no other writer is this feeling expressed with such force and variety. He compares his persecutors to lions, to savage beasts, xxxv. 17; he describes their malice, their ferocity, their craft and treachery, vii. 14, 15, xi. 2; their calumnies, vii. 3, xii. 2, xxxv. 11, 20, lvi. 5, lvii. 4; their pride, xii. 2, 3, lii. 1, 7, lix. 12; their sensuality and insolence, xvii. 10, xxxv. 16; above all, their utter ungodliness, xii, lii. 7. We find anticipations of the utter ruin of the persecutors, lix. 7; they are continually the objects of God's wrath, vii. 11, Who will rain upon them snares, fire, and brimstone, and a horrible tempest; xi. 6. Such anticipations are characteristic of psalms in the second book, which the inscriptions assign to David's youth, *e.g.* lv. 15, 19, 23; lvi. 7, 9; lvii. 6; lix. 11; compare the words of David, 1 S. xxvi. 19. A careful examination of the expressions used in the psalms now in question will satisfy the reader that they bear strong marks of individuality, and of feelings, if not wholly peculiar, yet specially appropriate, to the circumstances and character of David in his youth. Compare 1 S. xxvi. 19.

5. The imagery in these psalms, if not peculiar to David, has yet characteristics which bring his personality vividly before our minds, and help us to realize his position and feelings. They abound in references to warfare; the Psalmist's mind is constantly occupied by thoughts of strife and battle, the onset, the desperate struggle, the sudden defeat, the shout of victory. In his earliest psalms we have the wicked in ambush, bending his bow; but detected and discomfited, falling into his own pit, slain by his own weapons: Ps. vii. 15, 16. To David God is specially present as a God of battle, wielding the spear and the sword, taking hold of shield and buckler (Ps. xxxv. 1—3); as Himself the Psalmist's Shield, or more commonly his Rock, his Fortress, his Stronghold, images specially connected with the dangers and escapes of David's exile. All these figures recur constantly in these psalms, but are comparatively rare in those which are attributed to other composers. Other images belong rather to David's experience as shepherd. The love of nature is not as yet shewn in conscious reflections, unless indeed we attribute the eighth and the twenty-third psalms to David's youth: but, as might be expected in one at once so full of genius and so actively engaged, it is manifested spontaneously and naturally in vivid portraiture of all that passes before him; forms of grace and beauty; wild beasts tearing, rending, or crouching, and then rushing on their prey; storms and tempests alternating with sudden flashes of light, and with scenes of peaceful loveliness. We have before us the early stage in the formation of a mind susceptible to impressions, which will find fuller utterance in later years.

6. The characteristics of David's early style are so strongly marked, that they are discernible even through the veil of a translation. The English reader will not indeed recognize the archaisms of word and construction, which chiefly attract the attention, and determine the judgment, of critics: it may suffice here to state that, in the great majority of these psalms, they are numerous and unquestionable. But the suddenness and abruptness of the transitions, the complete predominance of feeling over external form, the elasticity of a spirit which feels every blow, and recoils instinctively from pain, yet at once recovers itself, putting forth new powers and overcoming with little effort all impediment and opposition, these and similar indications of genius of the highest order in an early process of development force themselves upon every mind capable of appreciating and sympathizing with them. Attention may also be called to the metrical structure, which, as will be presently shewn, has some marked peculiarities in those early psalms.

§ 8. *Psalms of the second period, between his accession to the throne and his great sin.*

On grounds partly stated in the commentary the following psalms may be more or less confidently attributed to this period.

viii. ix. x. xv. xvi. xvii. xviii. xix. xx. xxi. xxiii. xxiv. xxvi. xxix. xxxvi. lviii. lx. lxviii. ci. cviii. cx.

With David's accession to the throne a noticeable change, not indeed of direction, but of progress and development, comes over his spirit.

We observe in the first place that the spirit of devotion, ever increasing in earnestness and warmth, and expressed in terms of tender affection (see note on xviii. 1), has now a kingly character. The key-note is struck in the two psalms (xv, xxiv) which were recited when the ark was transferred to Jerusalem. David proclaims Jehovah as King of glory, and Lord of Hosts, attributing all past triumphs to His might; His dominion extends over the whole world, of which He is at once the Creator and Lord; a declaration of special importance, made just at the time when a local and permanent sanctuary was inaugurated. Warfare has a religious significance; but acceptance with Jehovah, and all access to His Presence, are determined exclusively by moral and spiritual qualifications. As a subject David had protested against deceit, slander, corruption and oppression; as a king he proclaims the expulsion of the guilty from the Tabernacle and the Holy Hill. In two other psalms, which probably belong to the same period, we have the same strain of thought: in the twenty-sixth David ex-

presses his own determination to keep aloof from the sins thus specially designated; in the hundred-and-first he announces his resolve to suppress them in his kingdom, to drive away the froward, to cut off slanderers, to destroy the wicked, and "cut off all wicked doers from the city of the Lord." The great outburst of devotion comes in the eighteenth psalm, which exhausts the experience of his early manhood. The reader will note, as characteristic of David, the accumulation of appellatives at the beginning (1, 2); his unshaken confidence in the midst of dangers (3—6); his realization of the might and majesty of God, Whose interposition is described as a Theophany, in language full of vivid perception of the grandeur of natural phenomena, and of the living Power to which they owe their true sublimity (7—15); the constant reference of all deliverance to Jehovah (16—18) is combined with a distinct consciousness that it depends upon a faithful discharge of all kingly duties (20—24). In this psalm we find the first intimation of consciousness of sin (see note on *v.* 23): on the other hand, a singularly full description of personal qualities, speed, force, elasticity, and indomitable energies, which however he ascribes entirely to the favour, and—a very remarkable word—the gentleness of the Lord (*v.* 35). As might be expected, the sense of dignity finds fuller expression at this period; it takes a different form, and rises into a higher sphere. The king feels that he occupies the position to which he had been called, and for which his qualifications had been tested and approved, and now for the first time recognizes the fact that it involves headship over the heathen (43), and a vocation to be teacher of the world; see note on *v.* 49, and compare ix. 8—11. We find indeed the same feeling of burning indignation which characterized his early psalms; it is equally strong, but less personal; it is directed against the ungodly (4), against traitors (18), oppressors (27), and foreign enemies (37—45).

The style of this period differs to some extent from that of David's youth. In some psalms the construction is difficult, owing chiefly to archaic forms; but, as a general rule, the flow of language is fuller and easier, the transitions less frequent and less abrupt: the eighteenth psalm, indeed, of which the authorship is not open to question, has a certain diffuseness, which may partly be accounted for as suitable to a liturgical, and probably a processional hymn, which would necessarily occupy a considerable time in the recitation; but for which a still more satisfactory reason may be assigned, if we regard the gradually increasing length of each successive portion, which gives a peculiar character to the structure of this grand Pæan, as a fitting expression of a heart overflowing with gratitude, and stirred by the remembrance of countless blessings.

§ 9. *Third period, from the fall of David to his flight.*

v. vi. xxxii. xxxviii. xxxix. xl. xli. li. lv. lx. lxiv.

In this series the change comes suddenly, even as the temptation of David and his fall. One psalm, the fifty-first, sets the king before us, and bares his heart in the crisis of his agony, in the depth of an abasement unparalleled in the records of God's servants. Yet in this psalm the old characteristics of devout trust in God (1, 14), of consciousness of a high vocation (11, 13), of generosity and unselfish patriotism (see note on *v.* 18), of a spirit at once impressionable and elastic, feeling to its inmost depths the wrath of God, but sustained by an ineradicable sense of union with Him, make us feel that we have the same man, whose teaching (see *v.* 13) will, like that of St Peter (cf. Luke xxii. 32), be henceforth more persuasive and heart-converting, full of sympathy and experimental knowledge, flowing from "a broken spirit" and "contrite heart." The same strain pervades all the psalms of this period: in no psalm to the end of David's life do we find the early consciousness of innocence: in none is there an absence of the sustaining influence of God's free Spirit. We trace the course of David's inner life, and of the outward events by which his sin was at once punished and corrected. In the notes on these psalms it will be shewn that some (xxxii) were probably written soon after his repentance; contrasting the bitterness of past

struggles with the blessedness of restoration. At a still later period we find again indications of renewed suffering, doubtless connected with the misery caused by the guilt of his children; the thirty-eighth psalm introduces a series, extending to the end of the first book, in which spiritual and physical prostration, outward calamities, successful machinations of conspirators headed and guided by one arch-traitor, the confidant and bosom friend of early years, are represented in strains full of vivid imagery and intense feeling. Such are the characteristics of other psalms probably belonging to the same interval (v, lv, lviii); yet even the fifty-fifth, which gives a full portraiture of his inner sufferings, and of the circumstances which endangered and afflicted him most sorely, breathes a spirit of hopeful prayer, and winds up with the key-note of his earliest psalm, "but I will trust in Thee."

§ 10. *Psalms written probably at the time of his flight, or before his restoration.*

iii. iv. xxvii. xxviii. xxxi. lxi. lxiii. lxix. lxx. cxliii.

Of these the sixty-third is probably the earliest, composed on the morning after the flight from Jerusalem: it illustrates most remarkably the characteristics, so often noted, of susceptibility to all impressions, and elasticity; in none indeed is the contrast more strongly marked; by a sudden rebound the king rises at once to a joyous consciousness of God's continued help, and of his own salvation. Here too the indignation against traitors, which in youth had been intensely personal, in middle age dignified and kingly, assumes a prophetical character; see notes on *vv.* 8, 9. The same feelings breathe in the sixty-first, written probably after crossing the Jordan; and in the twenty-seventh, which appears to have been composed shortly before the decisive battle: the remembrance of past guilt haunts David, *v.* 9; but all other thoughts are swallowed up in the certainty that he would be lifted up, offer sacrifices of joy, and see again the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. The psalm winds up with the old strain, adapted to his actual circumstances, "Wait, I say, on the Lord."

§ 11. *Psalms belonging to the last period of David's reign.*

To this period may probably belong those psalms in which the didactic character predominates: in none is the identity of spirit with the productions of youth and early manhood more conspicuous than in the 139th; in none is there a more perfect development of the noblest and most spiritual elements of David's nature. An intense realization of God's immediate and all-pervading presence, issuing in a consciousness of his own dependence and security; a feeling, not, as in early youth, of natural innocence, or, as in mid-life, of accepted penitence, but of a heart cleansed and renewed, and a life at last clear from every wicked way (24); a spirit at once humble and confident; a lively appreciation of the majesty and preciousness of God's purposes manifested in His works and dealings with man: such are the great thoughts in this psalm: and it is to be noted that, while we have the last, crowning form of the old ever-recurring strain of indignation and perfect hatred of the wicked, it is here grounded wholly on the sense of their antagonism to God. See *vv.* 21, 22 and compare 2 S. xxiii. 6, 7. The spirit of Ps. ciii., which is attributed to David, points to the same period: chastened, pardoned, healed and perfectly restored, the Psalmist calls on all creatures of Jehovah, all His works in all places of His dominion, to join in blessing Him.

As a general result it may be fairly maintained, (1) that by far the larger number of the psalms, attributed to David in the inscriptions, bear the characteristics which are most prominent and most peculiar in those, which critics, who accept any psalms as Davidic, unhesitatingly and unanimously ascribe to him. (2) Those characteristics are pointed out by critics in reference to psalms about which they differ most hopelessly. Psalms, which Ewald rejects or assigns to very late periods, are fixed upon by Hitzig, Köster, and others, as bearing undoubted marks either of extreme antiquity, or of the personal experience and character of David. (3) It is quite possible that some which bear the name of David underwent alterations, probably in order to adapt them to the

liturgical services of the temple, with additions suggested by the circumstances of the times; and that others may have been compiled from different psalms. The preposition (ל) "to," or "of," or "for," does not necessarily imply that the psalm was actually written by the person to whose name it is prefixed. (4) The difference of style between psalms attributed by the most advanced critics to the youth or early manhood of David, is a point of great importance in this inquiry. It is admitted that while, as a general rule, they are replete with archaic forms, obsolete words, and difficult constructions, impetuous in movement, and rapid in transitions, yet that several of them are remarkable for easy flow of thought and language. This applies not only to psalms written respectively before or after his accession to the throne, but to different psalms of each period. It might be inferred that psalms written towards the close of his long reign, after the settlement of the political affairs, both foreign and domestic, or under the shadow of approaching death, would differ to a far greater extent from earlier compositions. We might expect to find a deeper tone of thoughtfulness, as in Ps. cxxxix, a calmer and more sustained air of majesty, as in Ps. xxxvii; and a special adaptation of his teaching to the wants of his people and his own children: hence perhaps the gnomic character of such psalms as xxv. and cxlv. It cannot indeed be shewn that alphabetic psalms bearing the name of David belong altogether to this period; some of them (ix. and x) have the characteristics of his earliest style; yet it is a form which would commend itself specially to an aged teacher of the people, anxious that each precept should be fixed upon their memory, and writing with the facility of long practice. Even in the latest psalms brightness and splendour of imagery, warmth and promptness of sympathy, alternating with burning indignation, shew that the great Psalmist retained his character and genius unclouded to the end.

§ 12. *Psalms attributed to other authors.*

The question as to the authenticity and date of psalms, attributed to Moses, Solomon, Asaph, the sons of Korah, Heman and Ethan, will be discussed in the commentary briefly, yet with reference to modern criticisms. Here it may suffice to state that the internal evidence is admitted in many of these psalms to be probable, if not conclusive. Even in the ninetieth psalm, which presents most difficulty (see the note on *v.* 10), Hupfeld and other critics recognize a special fitness to the character and circumstances of Moses. The psalms of Asaph are indeed generally regarded as the products of various times, and some may have been written by a descendant of this contemporary of David and Solomon bearing the same name; but it is certainly possible, and in the opinion of the writer very probable, that psalms referred by some to the captivity, by others to the period of Hezekiah, were written either towards the close of David's reign, as the seventy-eighth; or in the beginning of Solomon's, for recitation in the temple; or at the time of the Egyptian invasion under Shishak, as the seventy-fourth, seventy-ninth and eighty-ninth. The psalms assigned to the sons of Korah may extend over a longer space; some belong apparently to the time of Hezekiah (*e.g.* xlviii. and lxxviii); but there are good, if not conclusive, reasons for connecting some with the period of David's exile, *e.g.* xliii. xliv, and others apparently with events under the early kings of Judah.

A large proportion of psalms in the last two books (Pss. xc—cl) undoubtedly belong to the period during or following the exile. It will, however, be shewn in the notes on Pss. xc—c. that several of these, to which critics have assigned this or a later date, were more probably composed before the overthrow of the first temple. The psalms written during the exile are not numerous, but deeply interesting, *e.g.* Ps. cxxxvii: those written later are partly gnomic, as cxix, partly liturgical; some, called Songs of Degrees (cxx—cxxxiv), of singular beauty, probably in part adaptations of ancient hymns (see notes on cxxiv. and iv, cxxxvii, cxxxi, cxxxiii), are supposed by some critics to have been written specially for the use of worshippers on their way to the sanctuary at the annual festivals[1]. It is also possible that the

[1] See, however, the remarks in the introduction to Ps. cxx.

psalms attributed to David in the last book may have been reconstructed, or modified for recitation in the second temple (compare Ps. xcvi. with 1 Chro. xvi): some of these are remarkable for grace and vigour (*e.g.* ciii, cxxxviii), and others bear internal evidence to the correctness of the inscriptions.

§ 13. *Psalms which have been referred to the Maccabean age.*

We have now to deal with the question whether any, and, if any, which psalms could have been written in the age of the Maccabees. At various times critics and theologians of high character have held that some undoubtedly belong to that period, and were probably introduced into the canon when the collection was made by Judas Maccabeus; thus we read in 2 Maccabees ii. 14, "In like manner also (sc. in the same way as Nehemiah had done), Judas gathered together all those things that were lost by reason of the war we had, and they remain with us." This assumption in itself should not be regarded as indicating any tendency to scepticism; though the spirit in which it has been supported, and the extent to which it has been carried, are open to grave objection. Hitzig in the latest edition of his commentary (1863—1865) assigns the whole of the three last books (*i.e.* from lxxiii) to the Maccabean period: while Olshausen and Lengerke deny that any single psalm is incontestibly David's, and assert that by far the largest portion of the book is Maccabean. Still, limiting the assumption to certain psalms which are supposed to bear internal evidence of Maccabean origin, it has been favoured by critics who fully believe in the inspiration of Holy Scripture and in the authenticity of the Davidic psalms. Thus Calvin regarded three psalms, xliv, lxxiv, lxxix, as possibly Maccabean; Venema (1672—1677) assigned thirty-four psalms to that period; and he was followed by Dathe and Mutinghe. Within the last half century the question has been sharply contested, and in some instances on both sides with an entire absence of doctrinal prepossession. Thus Delitzsch accepts the theory within certain limits, and among its strongest opponents are such critics as Ewald, Gesenius and Bleek[1].

The following arguments appear on the whole conclusive against the assumption.

1. Even from the notice in the book of Maccabees, it is clear that Judas Maccabeus is stated simply to have gathered together books which had been lost; so far following the example of Nehemiah, but not, like Nehemiah (see *v.* 13), adding writings of his own or of his contemporaries. There is no reason to doubt that the collection, substantially in its present form, existed at that time. Bleek holds that it cannot be proved on any sufficient grounds that a single psalm in our psalter is later than Nehemiah, who lived 300 years before the Maccabees.

2. There are indications, held by critics, *e.g.* Bleek and Hupfeld, to be all but conclusive, that the doxologies at the close of each of the five books of the psalter existed when the book of Chronicles was written; see 1 Chro. xvi. 36. It is certain that that book was completed in the 4th century B.C., and that it was received into the canon, at the latest, when the collection was made by Judas Maccabeus.

3. There are no intimations in the books of Maccabees that any writers of that time were regarded as inspired, nor are there any traces of a national outburst of lyrical poetry; it was emphatically an age of fierce action, such as indeed has often produced poets, but which, as often, absorbs all energies in its desperate struggles. Had a poet at that time given a voice to the national feeling, or roused the national spirit by utterances claiming prophetic inspiration,

[1] Ewald has the following remark in his Preface to the second part of his last edition (1866) of the Psalter. "Nothing can be more untrue and more perverse (verkehrter) than the opinion that there are any Maccabean psalms at all in the psalter, and now forsooth the greater part of the psalms (are assigned to that period); nay, some even to the last century before Christ, as compositions of the utterly dissolute Hasmonean king Jannæus!" p. 9. This refers specially to Hitzig, who supposes that Alexander Jannæus composed several psalms, among them the first, the second, and the hundred-and-fiftieth; and that he finally settled the order of the psalms, the division into five books, and the reception of the whole into the Canon.

it is scarcely probable that all traces of his influence or of his very name should have been obliterated from the remembrance of his people.

4. Among critical objections to the hypothesis, the most convincing rests on the style. The style of those psalms which are most confidently asserted to be Maccabean is pure, noble, dignified, differing in no respect, either in language, metrical structure, tone of thought, or variety and beauty of imagery, from the best age of Hebrew poetry. There is indeed no extant document to shew to what extent the language had been modified at that age; but there can be no doubt that it was already most seriously affected by foreign influences and those not exclusively Semitic; and that it had undergone an internal process of deterioration, or possibly of assimilation to its original stock. The earliest extant documents between the close of the canon and the time of our Lord indicate the increasing influence of Aramean; of which there are unquestionable traces in the later canonical books.

The complete refutation of this hypothesis must of course depend upon the true exegesis of the psalms themselves: this has been kept in view in the commentary upon those psalms which are claimed most confidently by its supporters. It will be shewn that while a highly probable date can be assigned to the 44th, 74th, and 79th psalms, the internal evidence is conclusive against the Maccabean theory.

§ 14. *Formation of the Psalter.*

The questions at what time and under what circumstances the psalter was brought into its present form, and by what principle the arrangement of the psalms in each portion was determined, cannot be answered confidently. Some points however stand out clearly, and for others probable reasons may be alleged.

It may be taken for granted that no additions or material changes were made after the collection by Judas Maccabeus. It may be also regarded as all but certain that Judas Maccabeus handed down without alteration the documents which he collected. There is every reason to accept, no substantial reason to question, the statement that the collection was extant, or at the utmost completed, in the time of Nehemiah, when it is probable that the liturgical psalms at the end were affixed.

We may admit that the last collector finally settled the form of the psalter: yet there is reason to believe that he adhered on the whole to previous arrangements, both of the books, and of the psalms in each book. A regard for tradition, a profound, not to say superstitious, reverence for antiquity, especially in regard to works which were ever regarded as emanating from divinely inspired writers, are characteristics of the Hebrew race.

Judging by internal indications we may be justified in assuming that the first book was arranged substantially in its present form soon after the accession of Solomon. It is not likely that Asaph and his colleagues, who then presided over the liturgical services of the temple, would have neglected the transcription of David's psalms. The second book may have been added to it soon afterwards: but the peculiar character of the inscriptions (see p. 149), and the use of the divine names, indicate a different redaction. Both may be best accounted for by assuming that the second book was arranged with a special view to recitation in the temple, under the guidance of Solomon, or of the leaders of the Levitical chorus[1]. The arrangement of the psalms in these two books is certainly not chronological throughout. Indications of a special purpose may be pointed out. The introductory psalm stands apart, and was perhaps written by Solomon. It is not without a meaning that this collection is set in between two psalms of kingly consecration; whether, as Ewald supposes, the second psalm was written by Solomon, or, as seems more probable, by David; the seventy-second psalm, beyond doubt, refers to Solomon. Probable reasons for the place of other psalms may be

[1] The notice at the end of the seventy-second psalm distinctly marks one epoch in the formation of the psalter. The words "The psalms of David the son of Jesse are ended," could not possibly have been written by the reviser of the last two books, for they contain several psalms ascribed in the inscriptions to David.

assigned on the assumption that they were arranged with special reference to the temple service. Thus the 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th are fitted severally for recitation at morning and evening. Yet, allowing for such transpositions, an order of time may be discerned in the first book: from the 8th to the 13th we have psalms of David's youth; from the 14th to the 21st of his early reign; while the later psalms in the first book belong, with few and doubtful exceptions, to the troublous times preceding his flight from Absalom. The psalms in the second book may have been written within the same period.

The third book appears to have been collected in a later reign, not improbably in that of Jehoshaphat. Strong reasons are given by Mr Elliott, see pp. 507—512, shewing that the greater number of psalms in the fourth book were probably composed before the close of Hezekiah's reign. It is expressly said that Hezekiah "commanded the Levites to sing unto the Lord with the words of David and of Asaph the seer:" 2 Chro. xxix. 30.

The last book contains several psalms of the age of Ezra or Nehemiah, but many also which bear the name of David. It is impossible to say from what sources the latest collector drew these psalms, most of which have characteristics which leave little doubt of Davidic authorship, while some are of surpassing beauty.

§ 15. *The Psalter, considered in its bearings upon the development of Doctrine in the Hebrew Church.*

In this place it may suffice to bring together some general principles, which will be illustrated by the following commentary.

Three great points call for separate consideration: (1) the ethical or spiritual teaching of the psalter; (2) the aspect under which it contemplates the doctrine of retribution, a point which involves the question of a future life; (3) the direct prophecies, or typical foreshadowings and anticipations of the Messiah.

§ 16. *Ethical teaching.*

1. Comparing the teaching of the Psalter with that of the Pentateuch, and the earlier historical books, we feel little hesitation in asserting that it indicates a considerable advance in the appreciation or exposition of ethical and spiritual truth. It is indeed true that no new principles of morals, strictly speaking, are introduced; but the development of principles previously recognized, and their application to a great variety of characters and circumstances, prove that the consciousness of spiritual men had been more thoroughly penetrated, and more completely moulded, by them. This observation applies not only to the psalms recognized as Davidic, but, with at least equal force, to those attributed to Asaph, and to the Korahites, and to those Psalmists who lived during or after the Babylonish captivity.

Among these principles none is more striking than the due adjustment of the inward and the outward; the spiritual work, and the devotional expression, of religion. This adjustment is effected, not by any restraint imposed upon either, but by giving free play to both; the spirit is encouraged in its highest flights of ecstatic rapture, and the devotional feelings are most intimately connected with the services of the sanctuary. This combination comes out at once in the earliest psalms of David; we have in his first words (whether we take the 11th psalm with Ewald, or the 7th, as the first fruit of his genius) the expression of unshaken trust, faith as the support of spiritual life, evinced in uprightness of heart (vii. 10, xi. 1, 2), associated with mention of the sanctuary (xi. 4). Thus, again, David takes the occasion of the inauguration of the tabernacle on mount Zion (an event which he celebrated with an unprecedented multitude of sacrifices, and all the formalities of ceremonial observance) to inculcate the fundamental principles of morality, above all purity of heart, as the conditions of acceptance (see notes on xv, xxiv). At the crisis of his fall, in the agony of his repentance, truth in the inward parts is recognized as God's great requirement; while the sacrifices of righteousness are reserved for the season of acceptance (see notes on li. 19). Throughout his psalms David expresses intense delight in all holy seasons, services, and observances, fervent longing when separated from the tabernacle for a season (lxi, lxiii); he is never weary of extolling

the grandeur, beauty, and heart-controlling influences of the sanctuary; but he dwells with far higher rapture upon the heavenly realities, of which these are significant adumbrations; secure of God's love, joying in God's presence, reposing on His protection, whether in his flight from Saul, or in conflict with foreign enemies, or in the period of deepest humiliation, of bodily and mental suffering. xxxi. 22, lxiv. This characteristic above all marks the psalms of the Korahites, and of the chiefs of the Levitical choirs, Ethan, Heman, and Asaph. In these we remark on the one hand an enthusiastic love of the temple, and a burning thirst for the privileges of outward communion; see xlii. 1, 2, xliii. 3, and lxxxiv. 1, 10, a psalm which, above all others, gives the portraiture of a loving ministrant in the temple, like good spirits in Dante ('Paradiso,' Canto III. 63—93), rejoicing in the lowest place: but, on the other hand, these psalms contain the very strongest declaration to be found in the Bible of the absolute worthlessness of all ceremonial observances, of sacrifices and burnt-offerings, though offered in obedience to the law, and in perfect accordance with the declared will of God, excepting so far as they are expressions of a heart purified by repentance, eschewing evil, and full of gratitude for spiritual grace; to him only "who orders his conversation aright" will He "shew the salvation of God." See Ps. l. 7—12, 16, 23.

This fact calls for very special attention; it shews the groundlessness of the assertion that there existed an antagonism between the priestly and prophetic orders. David indeed may be regarded as a representative of both, not as priest or prophet in the strictly formal sense, but as combining the spiritual characteristics of both offices; but Asaph and the Korahites belong by birth, and calling, by taste, feelings, and habits, to the class of ministrants.

The qualities which characterize David have been already considered: though in some respects peculiar to him, yet in great part they belong to other Psalmists; such, for instance, as intense zeal, calling for the utmost severity of God's judgments against the heathen, yet with a view to the conversion of the world; Pss. lxxxii. 8, lxxxiii. 18, lxxxvii. 4—6: compare notes on Ps. xviii. 43, 49; and Ps. cxlv. 21.

The ideal man, considered apart from the realization in Christ, as portrayed by the Psalmists, has these characteristics: unshaken trust in God, entire devotion to His service, submission to His will, reliance on His love met by a corresponding affection, a more than filial tenderness (xviii. 1); a longing for His presence in the sanctuary, and for fruition of that presence in heaven; a thorough appreciation of the righteousness of all His dispensations; a confident, nay certain, anticipation of a full manifestation of His righteousness. Faith, hope, and love assume thus their true relative position in the development of the spiritual man.

On the other side we find singleheartedness, transparent truthfulness, utter absence of guile, purity of heart as the centre and mainspring of moral life: justice, fortitude, self-control, rectitude in dealings between man and man: generosity, Ps. vii. 4, sympathy with all forms of suffering, warm and tender towards friends, but ever prompt and earnest towards all men, even opponents, Ps. xxxv. 13: loyalty of subjects to their king, unselfish self-sacrificing love of princes to their people. Here too, not for the first time, but in a higher degree than ever, and with a singular nearness to the Christian ideal, we remark the grace of humility: the sense of poverty and need: the first distinct intimation that a broken heart and contrite spirit are acceptable sacrifices to God, Ps. li. 17, and that the meek and lowly are especial objects of his favour and grace, Ps. xviii. 27.

The ideal is not as yet perfect; not to speak of its imperfect realization, it wants some essential graces, graces however of which no heathens felt the need, which they neither desired nor appreciated. Such are love of man extending to enemies, entire abnegation of self-righteousness, the permanent sense of unworthiness, and above all unlimited forgiveness of injuries, the extirpation of the bitter root of hatred and revenge. Yet even for these greatest and most special characteristics of the Saviour's teaching, there is a preparation, a foreshadowing,

often interrupted, yet never wholly broken off, which enables Christians to use the psalter both in private and public devotions without misgiving, and with deep thankfulness for the help which it supplies to the spiritual life.

§ 17. *Notices of a future state.*

2. Closely connected with these characteristics are the feelings and hopes of the Psalmists touching a future state. It is clear on the one hand that no distinct revelation of a future state of retribution had as yet been vouchsafed to the Israelites. It is indeed certain—our Lord's authority makes it certain—that the truth was implicitly contained in God's manifestation of Himself as the God of Abraham and the fathers; and also that Patriarchs of old looked upon life here but as a pilgrimage (Heb. xi. 13, compare note on Ps. xxxix. 12). Still we cannot reasonably doubt that to the generality of the people the grave, or the unknown Sheol of which the grave was the entrance, bounded the region of hope and fear: whatever they might conjecture touching the state after death, few indeed appear to have distinctly realized it as a state of consciousness, or one to be followed by restoration. It has been shewn in the introduction and notes to Job, that the problem had exercised the spirit of early thinkers; that a great stride had been made towards its solution; that the writer of that book at least felt that attempts to vindicate the righteousness of God would be futile, were it left unsolved; and that in the agony of the death-struggle, when all other hope was finally abandoned, the conviction sprang up that God would manifest Himself in some unknown way as the Redeemer. But the hope, as was there shewn, was after all but vague and subjective; little more than a preparation of the soul which entertained it, for a future disclosure of the truth.

It will be admitted that in no other book but Job earlier than the Psalms is this question distinctly raised: if indeed that book were relegated to the age of Solomon, or a still later age, it had not hitherto been raised at all. We have to inquire what position with reference to this doctrine is taken by the Psalter.

It would be easy to settle the question were we to decide it by reference to the very numerous passages, in which the state of the departed is represented as one of darkness, where there is no "remembrance of God," where "He is not praised," neither loved nor dreaded. On looking at those passages carefully, we may indeed find reason to conclude that they speak of the condition of those who are the objects of divine punishment, or that they express the fears of one, who regards himself as having incurred the divine displeasure: still it is true on the whole that they leave an impression of a final triumph of death, of the annihilation of consciousness. "Man returns to his dust and all his thoughts perish:" such apparently even towards the close of the psalter is the deliberate judgment of the latest reviser. Ps. cxv. 17, cxlvi. 4.

But even in those psalms which contain such declarations in the strongest form we are struck by the expression of feelings which are wholly incompatible with the certainty of annihilation: in none are there more lively, joyous expressions of trust and hope (see especially the last half of Ps. cxlvi; and xiii. *v.* 3, contrasted with *v.* 5). Nor are those expressions in many instances to be explained as referring to the anticipation of a temporary deliverance from death, or to the postponement of a general and inevitable doom. The Psalmists speak of thanks to be offered to the Lord God for ever (xxx. 12, lxi. 8, cxlv. 1, and *v.* 21), of an eternal portion in heaven (xxxiii. 6), and of the end of the perfect and upright as peace (xxxvii. 37). In the very depth of humiliation and hopelessness so far as this life is concerned, God is called upon as helper, deliverer and redeemer, xl. 17, as "the Lord my salvation," xxxviii. 22; cf. lxxxviii. 1. The general judgment is regarded as a day when the wicked shall not stand in the congregation of the righteous (i. 5); as the morning of the eternal day when the upright shall have dominion over them (xlix. 14), when the righteous shall see the light, while the man who is "in honour and understandeth not is like the beasts that perish," ib. 20.

It is true that in most psalms such passages, taken separately, can be denuded of their meaning; and critics, who have made up their minds on other grounds that the doctrine of a future

state was unknown to the Hebrews, find little difficulty in disposing of some texts as exaggerated representations of temporal hopes, and of others as figurative. It would be unjust to impute sinister motives, or even a deficiency of faith and reverence, to those who consider that the revelation of a future state was reserved for a later stage in the disclosure of the divine purposes, and that it was not authoritatively given before the coming of Him who brought life and immortality to light. Still, taking such statements in their combination and mutual bearings, as explaining, developing, and illustrating each other, it is strange that any should fail to recognize throughout the psalms a state of feelings and convictions which speaks of a deep, though it may be but half conscious, faith in the perpetuity of the soul, the light, the glory (xvi. 9), the spiritual principle of God's rational creatures. The soul will see "light in God's light," xxxvi. 9; "God will be its portion for ever," lxxiii. 26.

It may indeed be conceded that no objective revelation had as yet been vouchsafed. What the Psalmists believed or hoped for touching the future state in or after Sheol was, so far as we can judge, even to the last a subjective conviction. It may also be admitted that inasmuch as the psalms were, with few exceptions, intended for public recitation, popular in their character, and giving expression to general convictions, even while casting upon those convictions the light and warmth of a spiritualized intelligence, they are not likely to contain express intimations of a truth, which, if known at all as a truth resting on external communications, was known as such only to the few. All that we have a right to affirm touching the great bulk of the Davidic psalms, indeed of the whole psalter, is that there are throughout indications more or less distinct, sometimes faint, sometimes singularly bright and strong, of an undercurrent of feeling in harmony with the eternal truth, and with those undying and irrepressible aspirations, which God has implanted in souls bearing His impress, and susceptible of union with Him; a union which excludes the possibility of annihilation[1].

There are, however, some few psalms in which the lights diffused throughout the book are gathered up, and burn with a strength which extorts a somewhat reluctant, yet unqualified recognition even from the coldest of critics. Such especially are the sixteenth and seventeenth psalms. To whatever period we may be disposed to assign them, they bear witness to a perfectly developed consciousness of immortality in the writer. One of the sharpest critics (Hitzig), resting wholly on the internal evidence of language, style and indications of circumstances, assumes that they belong to the Davidic age, and in all probability to the early part of David's own life (see introd. to Ps. xvi. and note at the end of Ps. xvii). In that case they supply conclusive evidence of the existence of a deep-rooted belief at the time of the earliest collection. As we shall see presently, the psalm is Messianic: a fact which sufficiently accounts for the prominence which it gives to the thought of immortality. It is, moreover, evident that the writer was familiar with the book of Job, and that he especially refers to passages in that book which deal with the great problem of life. These are the positive statements, which, whether the Psalmist be speaking in the person of Christ, or giving expression to his own conviction, leave no room for doubt as to the full development of the hope. The Psalmist first speaks of his trust in God, of his exclusive dependence on Him, and declares that "Jehovah is the portion of his inheritance and of his cup."

[1] This thought is well expressed in a Sermon on eternal life, by M. E. Bersier, T. IV. p. 244, "Au reste j'avoue qu'à côté de ces élans, de ces pressentiments de l'éternité, il y a chez les croyants de l'ancien Testament des doutes, des anxiétés, des incertitudes en présence de la mort. C'est l'âge crépusculaire encore; les ombres se mêlent partout à la lumière. D'ailleurs, cette lumière n'éclaire que les âmes d'élite qui sont comme les hautes cimes du monde spirituel." In the appendix to that sermon Bersier gives a condensed account of the views of German critics, which bear for the most part a striking resemblance to that maintained by the writer: thus he observes of Klostermann, "après un examen approfondi des textes (sc. of Pss. xlix, lxxiii, cxxxix), il conclut que l'espérance de la vie future, qui y est si vivement exprimée, n'est fondée ni sur une doctrine traditionelle, ni sur une révélation positive et directe de Dieu, mais qu'elle jaillit toute entière du sentiment d'une relation personelle du croyant avec Dieu, relation qui doit être eternelle comme Dieu même," p. 268.

Hence it follows that he can never be overthrown, that his heart and spirit are full of joy; and that even his flesh will rest in hope, for his soul will not be left in Sheol, nor will God's holy one see corruption: fulness of joy and blessedness for evermore will be his at the right hand of God.

In the seventeenth psalm, which was probably written when David was exiled from the court of Saul (see introductory note), we have a development of the same thought, which proves that even in early youth David had meditated deeply on the subject. He sees clearly that the course of the wicked in this life may be, and often is, one of unbroken prosperity: they have their portion, an abundant one, satisfying their greed; he takes up the thought of Job (ch. xxi. 7—11) and carries it a stage further; a joyous, careless, insolent life, spent in the midst of a prosperous and festive family, is terminated by a death, ofttimes sudden and painless (Job xxi. 13, 23; cf. Ps. lxxiii. 4), "and when they die they leave the rest of their substance to their babes." To set against this the Psalmist has only one, but that an all-sufficient support, "as for me I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness." See note on xvii. 15.

§ 18. *Messianic Psalms.*

3. The question as to the extent and character of the Messianic intimations in the psalms is in some respects similar to that which we have just considered, but in others it differs materially.

It may be shewn that scattered notices and expressions occur in a great number of psalms, which have more or less a Messianic significance; which may indeed be explained without reference to our Saviour, yet find in such reference the most satisfactory elucidation: and again, that in some few psalms the Messianic features are brought out so strongly, that they are recognized by critics of every school, not excluding those who look on the hope as little more than a pious hallucination.

On the other hand, it seems clear that, whereas the hope of a future state rested rather upon subjective grounds than on objective revelation, the promise of a Messiah had been distinctly given, and that the doctrine formed an integral portion of the faith of the Hebrews.

In dealing with this question, however, we are beset by formidable difficulties. While all critics concur in the general recognition of Messianic hopes expressed by the Psalmists, they differ exceedingly as to the character and extent of this element in the book: nor does this difference exist merely between critics of opposite schools, but between many of those who are fully satisfied of the inspiration of the Psalmists, and who believe with St Peter (1 Pet. i. 11), and all Christian teachers, that the Spirit of Christ was in them and spoke by them (2 Pet. i. 21).

On turning to the ancient commentaries we find that the Fathers saw in every psalm distinct utterances of that Spirit. The Fathers did not indeed, as is sometimes asserted, hold that the individuality of the Psalmist, of David especially, was altogether suppressed; or that the words uttered by him did not give true expression to the movements of his own spirit; but they believed that they were overruled so as to become at the same time true utterances of the Spirit of Christ. That system did not always interfere with a careful and anxious study of the literal meaning: no one carries the system farther than Jerome in his commentary on this book, no modern critic has been more diligent in bringing all exegetical means within his reach to bear upon the interpretation; so that not content with the Latin version of the Septuagint he undertook a new and independent translation from the Hebrew, an attempt which drew upon him the sharp animadversions of such a man as Augustine. The system did however materially interfere with the historical interpretation, and tended to obliterate the striking evidences of individuality in the several Psalmists, and consequently of the authenticity of the psalms. It must be confessed, and ought not to be noted as a fault, that the early teachers of the Church, taking the psalms as helps and guides to devotion, and informers of the spiritual life in Christ, were too generally regardless of their primary and literal meaning. They lost comparatively little, and gained much which in this age it is hard to retain, in their intense

realization of that Presence, which, whether fully disclosed or dimly intimated, is the source and centre of the Psalmists' inspirations. With more or less of tenacity, with more or less of spiritual discernment, that system was held by all the great mediæval writers, nor is it wholly abandoned, or likely to be abandoned, by those to whom critical, literary, or exegetical considerations are as nothing in comparison with Christ. Were there indeed no alternative save that of rejecting the Messianic interpretation altogether, or of applying it throughout, few earnest Christians would hesitate to cast in their lot with those who accepted the latter: it would bring them nearer to the mind of the Spirit, and would in very many passages involve less strain upon the exegesis.

In fact this system, so far as its main principles are concerned, rests upon foundations which cannot be subverted without danger to the entire fabric of Christian doctrine; nor without disregarding some of the most obvious rules for the interpretation of contested documents.

It is well known that the Messianic interpretation of each and every psalm, which is claimed by the advocates of the system as directly and exclusively predictive of Christ, was received by the Hebrews long before our Lord's coming, and without any misgiving, or any trace of antagonistic opinion. The Rabbins, who are recognized as most faithful to old traditions, carry this system to quite as great an extent as the early Christian writers. A belief in Messiah founded upon the prophecies, and specially upon typical or direct predictions in the psalms, was one of the fundamentals of faith[1]. This point is not contested by any critics: they may treat it as a superstition, as a mere delusion, but the fact remains, and it is certainly without a precedent or parallel in the history of religions. We must also bear in mind that the system was retained for centuries after the Hebrew teachers were fully aware of the difficulty which it presented in carrying on the controversy with Christians. It drove them to curious and instructive shifts to evade the application. Sometimes they admit candidly that their only reason for relinquishing the traditional, and as they confess, the natural interpretation, is the use which is made of it by Christians. (See introductory remarks on Ps. ii.) Generally, however, they endeavour to explain away the application to our Lord by the theory of a double Messiah, each with characteristics, which to their mind are irreconcileable with the history of Jesus the Son of David; the one Messiah being the visible incarnation of majesty, beauty and might, the living Son of the living God, the image and reflection of the divine glory; the other, the descendant not of Judah, but of Joseph[1], smitten by God's wrath, rejected universally both by his countrymen and by the Gentiles, bearing as a scape-goat the sins and sufferings of mankind. With this system, they are able and willing to accept the twenty-second and other psalms, which depict the humiliation, anguish and death of Messiah, while they retain those which represent Him as King of Glory, and identify the Son of David with the Son of God, invested with the incommunicable attributes of Jehovah. Even at present the Jewish liturgies and ceremonial observances bear witness to the strength of the national faith in an atonement by the vicarious sufferings and sacrificial death of the Messiah[2], not less than in His glory and triumphs. That faith has been relinquished only by that portion of the nation, which combines antagonism to Christianity with utter rejection of the supernatural, and therefore the prophetic, element in their Scriptures.

As to the belief of the Jews of every

[1] *e.g.* It is the twelfth article in the 'Sepher rosh amuna' of Isaac Abarbanel.

[1] The passages bearing on this subject may be found at full length in the 'Pugio Fidei' of Raymond Martene, in Eisenmenger, and in Schoettgen's treatise 'de Messia' at the end of his 'Horæ Hebraicæ et Talmudicæ.' Schoettgen has some good arguments (Tom. II. p. 365), which deserve more attention than they appear to have received, leading to the conclusion that the fiction of a second Messiah as the son of Joseph was a perversion of the New Testament account of His birth; it appears first to have obtained currency at a period when the Christian Church was fully settled.

[2] The latest, and in many respects most important, work on this subject is that of Wünsche, 'Die Leiden des Messias.'

class in our Lord's time no doubt is entertained. "Les croyances messianiques," as a sceptical writer calls them, possessed the national spirit. Prophecies which appeared to be irreconcileable with each other, which indeed previous to their fulfilment could not be reconciled, were in every mouth. The writers of the New Testament quote them in reference to the events of our Lord's history without apology or explanation; nor did the Scribes and leaders of the people ever attempt to deny their bearing on the Christ. The ablest of all modern assailants of our faith holds indeed that these convictions were so definite and complete, that they produced an ideal form, which moulded the spirit of the early Christians, and issued in the representation of a Christ passing through suffering to glory.

If we put aside all consideration of the *authority* of these quotations by Apostles and Evangelists, we should still have a fact of unquestionable weight, proving that the interpretation was no after-thought, no development of general notions, but one which long preceded the application to the individuality of Jesus Christ.

But that authority, after all, is paramount and conclusive. It is the authority of Christ Himself. Christians, as such, are utterly precluded from the modern system of negative criticism. We have, on the one hand, applications of predictions in the psalms to His deepest humiliation, His betrayal, agony, and death; on the other, to His divine birth, His triumph over death and hell, His enthronement at the right hand of His Father. Keeping this as a primary condition, we may freely examine other questions, secondary in the highest sense, but of importance in the exegesis; (1) whether the psalms in general are to be regarded as Messianic; (2) whether again a considerable portion have a primary reference to David and other Psalmists, and a secondary one to Christ; and (3) whether any, and, if any, which psalms are directly and exclusively Messianic.

With regard to the first question, we remark that throughout the psalms two lines of thought are discernible: the same lines which run like threads of golden light through the texture of the ancient Scriptures. On the one hand, we have descriptions of the divine action, which bring God ever nearer and nearer to man, pointing ever more distinctly to a crisis of personal manifestation, by which the triumph of righteousness, the extirpation of evil, and the deliverance of the upright will be accomplished: and we observe that passages, in which this manifestation is most distinctly set forth, are claimed by the writers of the New Testament as directly connected with the Person and triumph of Christ.

At least we have here a general and pervading tone of Messianic anticipation.

On the other hand, there is a correlative elevation of humanity in the Person of a Representative, bringing it nearer and nearer to God. Passing through intense suffering, subjected to scorn, contumely and oppression, the ideal Head of the Theocracy rises ever higher and higher, reducing creation into subjection, ruling over Israel in righteousness, subduing and converting the heathen, extending His dominion to the world's end, recognized and enthroned as God's own Son on earth, and finally seated for ever in the fulness of divine glory on the right hand of God in heaven.

Wherever either of these two great lines of thought is discerned, and they run as a stream of light through the book, we have essential characteristics of Messianic inspiration.

Still when we pass from these general considerations to the examination of the psalms in detail, we are irresistibly led to admit that the characteristics which strike us most forcibly are not equally clear in all. In fact the difference in degree is so great that it approximates to a difference in kind.

We have, in the first place, a vast number of psalms in which no rational exegesis, that is at once candid and reverent, can find traces of Messianic prophecy: the principle may be there, but it is, so to speak, latent, wholly undeveloped. The writer is absorbed in the events of his own time, in his personal feelings; supported indeed by reliance on the divine power and goodness, but wholly irrespective of anticipations of a future change.

All these psalms ought to be interpreted without any attempt at what is called spiritual or mystic interpretation. When the central thought of each is brought out distinctly it will be found in accordance with the higher prophetic strain, but it must not be forced; much less should the frequent indications of natural passions be explained away: they belong to a period when the heart was in training for Christ, but did not as yet know the full working of His grace.

We have in the next place many psalms quoted in the New Testament in connection with Christ, and containing strong, indeed unmistakeable, indications of a recognition of fundamentally Messianic ideas; and yet most evidently full also of personal feelings, having all the characteristics of a strongly marked individuality.

Such for instance is the eighteenth psalm; such are others which express the feelings of David in his highest estate. The king is distinctly present to our minds as a living real person; and yet in this, and in the other psalms referring either to David or to Solomon in their kingly power, characteristics are blended which are wholly inapplicable to a human sovereign.

In the exegesis of such psalms it is clearly right in the first place to bring out into full light every trace of the individual; and then, perhaps in most instances as a separate subject for meditation, the features which are evidently ideal or typical. The more natural and simple the interpretation is, the better it will help us to do justice to the higher spiritual bearings.

Even more important is this principle when applied to the psalms written in distress of spirit, in consciousness of sin; such are, if not all, yet by far the greater number of psalms which were composed subsequently to David's great fall. In these psalms there are indeed numerous, and remarkably affecting passages, scarcely explicable save on the principle that the Spirit of Jesus gave depth and power to the innermost movements of the Psalmist's consciousness. We feel the Presence of the Atoner, the sympathizer, of Him who bears and makes His own the very agony of His sinful creatures. Still on the other hand the movements are undoubtedly David's own: the innumerable sins which he deplores are his own sins; the shame, the bitterness, the unspeakable anguish are altogether his own; at once the due and inevitable punishment, and the only remedy, for his guilt.

In the interpretation of all these psalms we hold fast to the literal interpretation; not but that when we gaze on the Man of sorrows, bearing our sins, we recall the strains by which under His controlling influence David had given full expression to the storms of agony which passed over his soul. Nor can we doubt that the Hebrews were guided by a sure instinct, when they held that, even in this period of his life, David bore sufferings which were typical of those of the Messiah. This impression is confirmed when in most of those psalms we find the expression of intensest suffering combined with unshaken and unalterable confidence in the love of God.

There are psalms however which go much further, in which a near approximation is made to the portraiture of One perfectly innocent, yet bearing chastisement due only to sin, and in some mysterious way incurring it as a merited penalty; and on the other hand having traits of majesty and spiritual dignity not less mysterious. These psalms would be recognized without hesitation as Messianic, were it not for the equally strong traces of personal feelings elicited, and sufficiently explained, by temporary circumstances. These are viewed differently, according as the reader accepts or rejects the general principle of typical and prophetical representations of Christ in the psalter. It would be hard to find any one who admits a supernatural element, to whom that principle is not a guiding light in the interpretation, though it ought not to supersede a careful and unbiassed inquiry into the literal meaning, and the circumstances under which each psalm may have been composed.

But we cannot rest within these limits. The writers of this commentary retain the position occupied formerly by all Christian expositors, and, as we have seen, by the ablest and most trustworthy exponents of Hebrew tradition, and

maintain the direct and exclusive reference to Christ in certain psalms.

We may here briefly consider three psalms, for the Messianic character of which we have authoritative declarations in the New Testament, in which also there is the strongest internal evidence; viz., the twenty-second, the forty-fifth, and the hundred-and-tenth. The reader, who is satisfied with regard to these, will find himself in a position to discern similar characteristics in other contested psalms.

One point stands out clearly; if we take these three psalms as Messianic, we have a vivid illustration of the principles previously laid down. We have Christ set before us in the two opposite, and, but for the light of revelation, irreconcileable, aspects, the one of deepest humiliation, the other of divine glory; we have also the convergence of the two currents, one bringing God ever nearer to man, the other raising man in the person of his Representative and Head to the right hand of God.

The Messianic character of the twenty-second psalm is vindicated by a remarkable variety of evidences, which are separately strong, and in their combination overwhelming.

We have in the first place positive evidence: the use of the first words by our Lord in His last agony. This may of course be explained away either as a simple reminiscence, or at the most a recognition of the typical character of the Psalmist's sufferings: but, considering the solemnity of the occasion, we most naturally regard this, like other words and acts connected with the crucifixion, as a seal and attestation to prophecy. This is confirmed by the direct and unqualified testimony of the apostle St John, and by direct quotations and many clear references in the other evangelical accounts of the crucifixion; see notes on *vv.* 1, 7, 8, 13, 16, 17, 18, 20, 22.

We have in the second place a correspondence with all the details of the sufferings of Christ so minute and exact as to make it certain that, if those details are truly narrated by the evangelists, they were the fulfilment of prophecy. We are arguing of course at present on the assumption of the trustworthiness of the narrators; but we may point out that the correspondence is recognized by critics who see in it a note of conscious adaptation.

All this might be admitted, and yet it might be maintained that, as in other psalms, the primary subject was the living Psalmist; and here we recognize a trait common to all prophecy.—The imagery throughout has a local character. As is shewn in the commentary, the position, enemies, and sufferings of the person are described in language suggested by external circumstances, a point of great importance in its bearing upon the question of authorship. But at the same time it is certain that the traits in their combination are wholly inapplicable to David. There is not only a total absence of consciousness of sin, which might be partly accounted for, supposing them to be a product of his early manhood; but, as is shewn in the commentary, from first to last the feelings and events are true of the Man of sorrows, and, to a great extent, of Him alone.

The general truth of this exegesis may perhaps be confirmed by subjecting it to a practical test.

Read the psalm with the character and position of David before the mind's eye; and see whether it is possible to keep to the literal interpretation. Was David at any time before his fall an object of general scorn, or even after his fall without a helper? was he ever brought to the dust of death? were his hands and feet ever pierced[1]? his bones denuded? his garments taken from him and allotted to his executioners? Was he in the power of his enemies?

Read it with Christ present to your mind, and all difficulty disappears.

The forty-fifth psalm has the same kind of evidence.

First, the direct attestation of Scripture in the epistle to the Hebrews, ch. i. 8, 9: allusions in the book of Revelation, i. 16 and vi. 2: and a general correspondence with the mystical or spiritual representation of our Lord's union with His Church, and His triumph over all enemies, in the New Testament: the figures of the Bridegroom and the Bride; the weapons sharp and irresistible, yet identified with the attributes of truth,

[1] See critical note at the end of Ps. xxii.

meekness and righteousness; and the sceptre of universal dominion founded on righteousness.

Secondly, the futility of attempts to identify the person of this royal bridegroom with any historical personage in the Old Testament. The King in this psalm is fairer than the children of men, His throne is for ever and ever, He is addressed directly as God, and He is the object of worship to the Bride.

We have Christ triumphant, the Son of Man in his exaltation, identified by the Psalmist with God.

This psalm is the witness of the Hebrew Church in the interval between David and the decline of the kingdom.

As the crowning declaration comes the 110th psalm[1]. Our Lord's authority decides two points, that the psalm was written by David, and that David is not the person addressed; Matt. xxii. 43—45. The application to Christ is made by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews; see ch. i. 13, v. 6, vi. 20, and vii. throughout.

It sets Christ before us distinctly, combining, as no sovereign of Judah ever dreamt of combining, the priesthood with royalty; ruling out of Zion, as the beginning of His dominion, and mystically its permanent centre; ruling in the midst of enemies, yet having the willing obedience of His people, and seated as Adonai on the right hand of Jehovah. In the last verses we accept the old interpretation which reads in them an intimation of the severe trials which preceded and made the way for His final exaltation.

Such, in broad outline, appears to be the Christology of the Psalter; bearing throughout a reference to the ultimate purpose of God, for which both the sufferings and preservation of His faithful servants were preparatory; in a considerable portion bringing into light the characteristics of the Saviour both in His humiliation and triumph, and at least in three psalms, probably in others of similar import, setting forth all the graces of His human nature in combination with the attributes of God.

The Psalter emptied of Christ would still be a collection of lyric poems of admirable beauty, breathing a pure and lofty devotion, representing in vivid colours the events and persons of the most remarkable people in the world's history. It would retain its position among the noblest and most interesting products of human genius. But to the Christian, as such, it would have no voice, no meaning; losing its highest and most distinctive characteristic it would forfeit its claims upon his reverence and love. May this work give some help to those who would fain be satisfied as to the critical and exegetical evidence which, in the minds of the writers, supports fully the old and imperishable convictions of the Christian Church.

[1] See the introductory note to this psalm.

APPENDIX.

On the Metrical System of the Psalms.

THE general inquiry into the metrical system of Hebrew poetry belongs properly to the Introduction to the Old Testament[2], but inasmuch as that poetry attained its highest development in the Book of Psalms, some leading points may properly be taken here into consideration. This is the more necessary since the metrical structure of the psalms has important bearings upon the exegesis, and especially upon questions touching their date and origin; and although it cannot be regarded as definitely settled in many cases, yet enough can be ascertained to suggest valuable results. This indeed can be effected to a far greater extent than in translations from languages, in which the metres depend wholly upon the quantity and number of syllables, and the strophes are absolutely regular or

[2] The question is dealt with by Bleek, Keil, § 108, De Wette, &c.

exactly corresponding to each other; as in the Epinician Odes of Pindar and the chorus of the Greek dramatists.

In fact, the first peculiarity which strikes the attentive reader of the psalms, as contrasted with the lyrical productions of other nations, is the subordination of the outer form to the inner sense. In the separate verses, and in the strophes, there are indications of law influencing the form; but that law, at once vigorous and flexible, adapts itself readily to the movements of the spirit. In no ancient or modern language do we find the same combination of law and liberty. We may regard this, with some critics, as a stage in the development of form, or with others, more justly, as a result of the deeper consciousness of the special and loftiest aim of poetry, bringing the spirit into contact with the divine: but it certainly constitutes the most important and the most distinctly marked characteristic of Hebrew psalmody.

We have to consider, first the structure of the separate verses, and secondly, the structure of the groups of verses, for which the name strophe, though but partially applicable, is now generally adopted.

One point may be regarded as settled. Ancient Hebrew poetry has no metres regulated by the numbers or quantity of syllables, though even in this respect an approximation to regularity is discernible, as a natural result of other principles[1].

It has however a very complete metrical system regulated by the grouping of thoughts. This applies both to the structure of verses, and of the so-called strophes.

The law of parallelism was first distinctly brought out by Lowth, 'De Sacra Poesi Hebræorum,' whose work is recognized by foreign critics as the most important as well as the earliest on the subject. Lowth, however, confined his researches to the examination of the members of sentences. Köster first extended the law to the construction of strophes.

The simplest and the commonest form of the rhythmical structure of separate verses is the distich; each verse consisting of two equally balanced clauses.

(a) These clauses sometimes express the same thought under different forms; generally however with some slight extension or modification of meaning:

> His delight is in the law of the Lord,
> And in His law will he exercise himself day and night.

(b) Or the second clause is antithetical:

> The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous,
> But the way of the ungodly shall perish.

(c) Or the second carries on the thought, draws out its consequences or results:

> Good and upright is the Lord:
> Therefore will He teach sinners in the way.

This is, in fact, the earliest known form of metre. It exists in extremely ancient specimens of Egyptian poetry[2], and occurs frequently in the Pentateuch and in poems which belong to the age between Moses and David.

The length of the clauses in these distichs varies, but upon an average a verse of two clauses contains from six to eight words: in the song of Moses, Deut. xxxii, the structure is very regular, most verses consisting of two clauses, each with three words; a rhythm which cannot be well represented in English, though it makes itself felt.

> Hear | O heavens | and I will speak,
> (*haazinu hasshamayim vaadabberah*)
> and hear, | O earth, | the words of my mouth.

Had this uniformity been maintained the result would have been a near approximation to the metrical system of the Aryan races, either iambic or trochaic as in Sanscrit, or dactylic as in Greek. But the Hebrew poet, while fully conscious of the charm of rhythmical cadence, preferred liberty to uniformity, and departed from the general rule in various directions.

1. In the verses of two clauses, which are the basis of the system, the composer sometimes uses only four words, two in each clause, as

> hear kings, hear princes;

but more frequently he increases the number to seven or even eight; still the divisions are always clearly recognized; and in Hebrew they are marked by a distinctive accent, *athnach*, *i.e.* rest, or pause.

2. Instead of couplets, verses of one clause only are frequently introduced, with consi-

[1] Rhyme first, and then metre, were introduced into Hebrew poetry in the seventh century after our æra; see Delitzsch in Herzog's 'Real-Encyclopädie,' s. v. *Psalmen*, p. 281. Rhyme is found occasionally, yet evidently without a system, in psalms expressing mental emotion, *e.g.* cvi. 4—7; cf. Jer. iii. 21—25.

[2] This fact has been pointed out by Lefébure, 'Traduction comparée des Hymnes au Soleil,' p. 15, 1868; and by Brugsch, 'Grammaire hiéroglyphique,' p. 94, 1872; where in a single quotation four instances of synthetic and one of antithetic parallelism are given, singularly resembling Hebrew poetry: "For God prefers purity to millions of riches, and to hundreds of thousands of gold; He feeds on the truth which satisfies Him, His heart is above all sin," or "watches over sin," *i.e.* His face is against them that do evil. The hymn to the Nile translated by M. Maspero has a special value; it dates from the Ramessian epoch, and is remarkably complete (Sallier 2, p. 11, 6—14, 9); each clause is marked by a red point in the papyrus, and each strophe has the first word in red letter.

derable effect; they are used either at the beginning (xviii, xxxii, lxvi), more rarely at the end, and sometimes in the middle between two strophes, marking very impressively the tone of thought.

3. Most common is the elongation of either or of both divisions of a verse, so that the whole may consist of three, four, five, and at the utmost six clauses. Still even then the general law of division into two portions is recognized; in no case is the Hebrew accent which marks such division repeated, but the subordinate clauses are marked by another accent[1].

As a general rule, the tristich has in one division two clauses balancing one clause in the other.

Exceptions: the three clauses are sometimes parallel, and of equal length; yet even here there is for the most part a closer connection between *two*, marked by the accent:

Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take it;
Yea let him tread down my life on the earth, (*athnach*)
And lay my honour in the dust.

Tetrastichs are common, but generally consist of two closely connected distichs (either synonymous, or antithetic, or synthetic); sometimes of a tristich and monostich. The pentastich consists generally of two distichs and a monostich—*e.g.* xxxix. 12.

It may be questioned whether the modern system of printing each clause as a distinct line is necessary, or advantageous; it separates clauses which are closely connected; and the ear readily detects the rhythm: a system of accents, taken as marks of intonation, might be preferable.

It is not necessary to dwell at any length upon this part of the subject: the laws of parallelism have been long recognized, nor has any considerable light been thrown upon them by late investigations.

We touch, however, upon a question far more difficult, and as yet but partially settled, when we inquire, first, whether Hebrew poetry has strophes in the proper sense of the word; and, secondly, assuming them to exist, under what forms or rules they may be classified[2].

The process first adopted and worked out with great skill by Köster rests on clear and satisfactory principles.

It is evident that in every poem there are certain points of rest or transition distinctly marked; there are often absolute breaks about which no question can be raised. In Hebrew they are generally marked, either by a change of persons, or by ejaculations, or by certain forms of expression which introduce or close a subject.

These principal divisions are, moreover, commonly subdivided into subordinate paragraphs, in which the pauses and transitions are more or less clearly indicated by the construction or by turns of thought.

As a matter of experience it is found in a very large proportion of the psalms, that, if the reader marks off, first, the principal divisions, then the subordinate paragraphs, the result is a striking and unmistakeable uniformity. Each psalm falls naturally into groups equally balanced, each group consisting of similar subdivisions. It is, however, evident that the result may be seriously affected by prejudice either adverse or favourable to the system. The divisions should therefore be determined in the first place exclusively by reference to the sense.

In some psalms the divisions are absolutely determined by the recurrence of ejaculatory refrains.

In many the word 'Selah' affords valuable help, though it cannot always be depended upon[3].

[1] Generally *ole vejored*, or *rebia*, which indicate a semi-pause, or pausal intonation. Thus,

The kings of the earth set themselves, (*rebia*)
And the rulers take counsel together; (*athnach*)
Against the Lord and against His anointed.

Both accents are sometimes used, as in this verse:

"And he shall be like a tree planted by rivers of water, (*ole vejored*, secondary accent)
That bringeth forth his fruit in his season; (*rebia*)
And his leaf shall not wither; (*athnach*)
And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

[2] It may, perhaps, be attributed to the influence of a new study that I am disposed to attach weight to the fact that Egyptian papyri, containing compositions earlier in date than any in the Book of Psalms, some earlier than the Pentateuch, recognize the regular division of poems into strophes. Each strophe in the Hymn to the Nile has the first word written with red ink (see note 2, p. 169); thus too the Hymn to Amon Ra in a papyrus of Bulaq, and the litanies to the sun in the 15th chapter of the Egyptian Ritual. It is not necessary to assume that the Hebrew poets consciously followed the Egyptian models, though far from improbable in the case of Moses; it suffices to prove that the division comes naturally; we may attribute its elaboration to the systematic character of the Hebrew mind.

[3] It is noticeable that the word Selah does not occur in the last two books of psalms, excepting in the 140th and 143rd psalms, both of which are ascribed to David. It may be inferred that it was not used as a musical note, perhaps it was not understood, at a late period; probably disappearing with the cessation of the temple-services during the captivity: it occurs for the last time in Habakkuk.

The meaning "pause" is most natural, but the etymology is wholly uncertain. It may be remarked that the Egyptian used the word *kerh*

In twenty-eight psalms Selah marks either all the divisions, or the most important divisions.

Thus Ps. iii. is divided into four strophes, of which the first, second and fourth close with Selah; the third is distinctly marked by the following ejaculation, "Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God" (iii, vii, ix, xxi, xxiv, xxxii, xxxix, &c.).

In some the Selah appears to have been accidentally misplaced, unless indeed, as is more probable, it served to call special attention to some important thought, not closing a paragraph, as iv. 3, lv. 19.

Although it may not always determine a division, yet it strongly confirms it when otherwise suggested.

A considerable number of the psalms fall at once into equal groups, which are now commonly designated strophes. They correspond to stanzas, or verses, in our metrical psalms.

We may pass by those psalms in which each line forms a complete verse, a system which scarcely justifies the use of the name strophe: they occur frequently in the later psalms, and belong to the period when the old metrical system appears to have become practically obsolete, *e.g.* xciii, cxxx, cxxxiii, cxxxiv.

We have, however, at least nine psalms in which the strophes consist each of two verses. This is the form most easily distinguished, and its existence is not questioned by critics. So iii, iv, xii, xxiv, xxxii.

Not less common are strophes each of three verses, of which the first psalm is an obvious specimen; it consists of two such strophes, of which the division is distinctly marked by change of subject.

When the strophes contain more than three verses, they are in fact only combinations of smaller strophes; thus Ps. lx. consists of three strophes each of four verses, or double distichs.

But these equal strophes are sometimes interrupted by verses which stand apart from the general system. This is most distinctly seen where the intercalated verse forms a refrain, as in Ps. xlvi, where the first strophe is marked by Selah, but the second and third have the refrain "the Lord of Hosts is with us." In such cases the separation from the general system fixes attention upon a great thought.

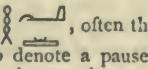
The most common use, however, of such verses is to mark the prelude, or close, or both prelude and close, of a psalm. Instances of these are pointed out in the brief notices of the structure, which the reader will find at the end of introductory remarks on the psalms. These may be taken as examples,

(1) at the beginning, x, xi, xiii, lii, c.
(2) at the close, vii, xiv, xv, xxi.
(3) at beginning and close, iv, xv, xxxix.

So far there is a general agreement among critics. But a vast number of psalms remain which do not come under this classification; in which the groups of verses determined by the logical coherence are of unequal length. Köster first shewed that in most of these psalms there are clear indications of a law, too obvious not to have been observed with full consciousness on the part of the Psalmist. His application indeed of the law is often questioned, and different divisions are proposed by other commentators: but although the uncertainty, which still attaches to his, and indeed to any other, arrangement in very many psalms, may justify us for the present in presenting the traditional form untouched—thus leaving the decision to the unfettered judgment of the reader—the principle may be regarded as settled; and critics agree generally to the classification which Köster has proposed for psalms consisting of unequal strophes[1].

1. We have psalms in which strophes of unequal length are arranged symmetrically, in parallel groups. These groups succeed each other (*e.g.* in this order, 2, 2, 3, 3); or they alternate with each other regularly (as 2, 3, 2, 3); or they occur in reverse order, presenting an antistrophic arrangement, differing from the Greek lyrical poems in the great variety and liberty of forms, yet corresponding to them in grace and harmonious interdependence. See Pss. vi, xlv, xlvii, xlviii.

Some of the most interesting and artistic combinations occur in the Korahite psalms, especially in those attributed to Asaph; they belong apparently to the period in which the art of psalmody attained its full development. The arrangement of the groups may have been determined to some extent by the position or movements of the Levitical choirs and of their leaders; in many cases the words spoken either by the high-priest or the chief musician are marked very distinctly, in others, the antiphonal responses are unmistakeable; and it is possible that a long and careful observation, corrected by sharp criticism, will bring out

(or *kelh*)  , often the alone for the group, to denote a pause, the close of a paragraph, or the transition to a different subject. The meaning of this word is "pause," "rest," or "termination." See Brugsch, 'Dict. Hier.' p. 1518; and 'Gram.' p. 96. In Pap. Sall. 1, 4—5, 5—4, &c., it introduces a different subject. This may possibly be the origin of the Hebrew word: the transcription of the second and third letters is exact, and , *k* or *g*, is sometimes softened into *s*; the guttural into the sibilant. This is a law in Aryan; see Bopp, §58: "The *s* in Zend is substituted both for the soft and hard *g* of Sanscrit, for the gutturals readily degenerate into sibilants."

[1] See Keil, 'Einleitung,' § 108, 2, 15.

these characteristics into fuller light. It must, however, be observed that in psalms attributed to David, and in some which are recognized as belonging to his earliest life, the preceding forms are found, evidently elaborated with full consciousness of their character. See remarks on Ps. xxxv.

2. There are, however, other psalms in which the indications of systematic arrangement are unmistakeable; but in which the strophes are neither equal, nor symmetrically responding to each other. They increase or decrease in length as the psalm proceeds. The increase or decrease in every case is determined by an inner law, traces of which are easily recognized: either by the abundance of subject-matter, or by the overflowing feeling of the Psalmist, as in Ps. xviii; see also xliv. The recognition of this arrangement is of considerable importance: it affects some of the psalms which are most perfect in tone of thought, in sublimity and beauty of imagery, and in artistic construction.

3. Lastly, there are undoubtedly psalms, like the dithyrambic poems of Greece, in which the outer form is wholly irregular; the division of the strophes being determined by some inner principle, or it may be by outward circumstances, of which no satisfactory account can be given. Among these psalms some few belong to the best age of Hebrew poetry: as for instance the twenty-first, which is a dithyrambic pæan. The generality, however, appear to be products of a later age; they are found, with exceedingly few exceptions, in the last part of the psalter.

The only psalms in which the thoughts of the poet occur without any progressive movement, and with little if any internal connection, are those which are called alphabetic. They are generally of a didactic character; some are, so to speak, florilegia, or collections of gnomes.

In these, each verse, sometimes each clause of a verse, begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet in regular order:

(a) each clause, Pss. cxi, cxii.

(b) each verse, xxv, xxxiv, cxlv; each couplet, or strophe of two verses, xxxvii.

(c) every verse in strophes of eight verses, each strophe with its own letter in order, cxix.

Some of the alphabetic psalms have striking irregularities. Thus in Ps. ix and x, forming parts of one composition, there is a very imperfect approach to alphabetic order; some letters are omitted altogether, others occur at irregular intervals. It would seem as though David in composing this psalm was first struck by the help which such an arrangement would afford to the memory, and that afterwards he worked it out more fully, though not even then completely, in the 25th and 34th psalms.

Keil observes that the simplest form, in which each letter in the alphabet begins a verse, or couplet (distich or tetrastich), is found only in Davidic psalms.

The irregularities in these psalms have given much trouble to critics. In a few instances it is possible that they may be owing to an oversight on the part of the transcribers: see notes on Pss. xxv, xxxiv. It has also been suggested that some deviations point to a different order of the ancient alphabet (see Keil, § 108, note 18), an unnecessary assumption, not borne out by those psalms (ix, x) which bear clear marks of archaic origin. Köster however observes that "when one considers all those irregularities as a whole, it is beyond doubt that they proceed from the writers themselves, who availed themselves of the alphabetic form only as a light bond, but never followed it servilely." This has been already pointed out as characteristic of Hebrew poetry in its best age. The observation is confirmed by a comparison of those psalms, which are attributed to David, with those which in style and tone of thought have the characteristics of a later age, according to their place in the psalter. The same critic remarks with equal truth that, taken by itself, this alphabetic order is no proof of a later age.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

PSALM I.

1 *The happiness of the godly.* 4 *The unhappiness of the ungodly.*

[a] Prov. 4. 14.

[1] Or, *wicked.*

BLESSED [a]*is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the [1]ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

2 But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; [b]and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

[b] Josh. 1. 8. Ps. 119. 1.

3 And he shall be like a tree

PSALM I.

This forms a concise introduction to the psalter, shewing the general objects and principles of the writers. It was thus regarded in very early times; thus Jerome, "some say it is, so to speak, the preface of the Holy Spirit." In some MSS. it is not presented as a distinct psalm, but simply as a preface; in others it is combined with the second. In the New Testament (Acts xiii. 33, according to some MSS.), and by many Fathers, the second psalm is quoted as the first. The date and authorship are uncertain; it has no inscription, nor is there any internal evidence which would justify us in assigning it positively to an individual; though some peculiarities of language, and the general tone of thought, point to Solomon. Some words seem to belong to a somewhat later period, but the critical evidence is not conclusive; and a comparison of *v.* 3 (where see note), with Jer. xvii. 8, may almost prove that it must have been written before the prophet's time. The style is clear, simple and graceful; neither bare nor overcharged with ornament; while the images and general characteristics of manners indicate a time when justice was duly administered, and comparatively few instances seem to have occurred of triumphant iniquity. There is little against and much in favour of the supposition that it was written before the disruption of Israel, or at least before the decadence of the kingdom of Judah.

The psalm is divided into two portions, each of three verses. In the first (1—3), the character and condition of the righteous are described—the character, as consisting, first negatively, in abstinence from all kinds of evil, and then positively, in the inner principle of loving allegiance to God's law: the condition, under the image of a tree planted by rivers of water. The second portion (4—6) predicts the destruction of the wicked in the day of judgment, when the final separation will be made between them and the righteous.

1. *walketh*, &c.] Three kinds of wickedness are described; active participation in evil counsels, quiet acquiescence in sin, association with scoffers. Whether a gradation is intended seems doubtful. The last stage in the development of enmity to God may be reckless and bitter scorn (see Prov. xxi. 24, and Ewald's striking remarks in the Introduction to Prov. p. 11); but the other words are so emphatic, implying either rebellious guilt or pollution of spirit, that it seems more probable the whole race of sinners passed before the Psalmist's mind, exhibiting various developments of the same malignant principle. Abstinence from all forms of sin constitutes the negative characteristic of the godly man.

the ungodly] The Hebrew word (*rasha*) is generally rendered **wicked**, as in marg. It is a word applied only to utterly ungodly men, never to frail, or even sinful believers: cf. Job xxi. 16, and see also note on Ps. xxxii. 5.

scornful] Prov. i. 22, iii. 34, xiii. 1. See also Jer. xv. 17. The word appears to be Solomonian: it does not occur elsewhere in the psalter.

2. *his delight*] The positive characteristic is thus set forth primarily with reference to the inner principle. The heart does not merely submit to God's law, but delights in it. That law includes all revelations of God's will, whether outward as in the Sinaitic code, or inward as written on the heart. Cf. Rom. vii. 22; Ps. xix. 8, 10, cxix. 35.

meditate] The word is used sometimes of utterance, but more generally of inward meditation; the thought of God is, as it were, the very breath of the spiritual man: hence its continuity; consciously or unconsciously the movements of the inner man are under the influence of God's will. Compare the injunction to Joshua, i. 8, and see Ps. lxiii. 6, lxxvii. 12, cxix. 97.

3. *like a tree*] Dean Stanley, who follows Ritter, suggests that the oleander, a beautiful evergreen, with bright red blossoms and dark green leaves, found now only in the valley of

[c] Jer. 17. 8. [c] planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; [f] Heb. *fade.* his leaf also shall not [f] wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

4 The ungodly *are* not so: but [d] Ps. 35. 5. Isai. 17. 13. *are* [d] like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

5 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

6 For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

PSALM II.

1 *The kingdom of Christ.* 10 *Kings are exhorted to accept it.*

[a] Acts 4. 25. [l] Or, *tumultuously assemble.* [f] Heb. *meditate.*

WHY [a] do the heathen [l] rage, and the people [f] imagine a vain thing?

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the Jordan, may be alluded to in this passage. 'S. and P.' p. 146. But the oleander, an indigenous shrub, needs no cultivation; it grows, but is not "planted" (see the next note); its leaves do not indeed wither, but they are unwholesome, or poisonous, and, as such, are unlikely to be taken to illustrate a good man's character: and, what is conclusive, it bears no edible fruit, a point which it seems strange neither Dean Stanley nor Dr Tristram ('Nat. Hist. B.' p. 417) should have noticed when they quote the words "that bringeth forth his *fruit* in his season." One evergreen, the palm-tree, carefully tended, still found in the gardens of Jerusalem, of old growing, as the dean shews (pp. 144—146), on Olivet, giving probably its name to Bethany, "the house of dates," and supplying branches for the Feast of Tabernacles (see Neh. viii. 15), and for our Lord's entrance into Jerusalem (John xii. 13), satisfies all the conditions of our text. It is conspicuous for its beauty; it indicates the presence of water; it bears precious fruit, and is a recognized emblem of the righteous man: see Ps. xcii. 12, 13, and compare Tristram, p. 384.

planted] The word is used properly of the scion of a tree severed from its parent trunk, and planted in a spot where it may be carefully tended. (Aquila has "transplanted;" but see Gesen. 'Thes.' s. v.). Cf. Jer. xvii. 5—8, where the simile is elaborately drawn out, as also the contrast with the state of the ungodly, "like the heath in the desert," *v.* 6. See also Num. xxiv. 6 (the first passage in which the simile occurs), and Job xiv. 9, xxix. 19.

rivers of water] Rather **streams of water**, water running in channels for irrigation. Cf. Rev. xxii. 2. LXX. and Symmachus have τὰς διεξόδους. The allusion to watered gardens is supposed by some to point to the north of Palestine, where trees growing by running streams are familiar objects, see Ezek. xvii. 5, 8; but the expression appears more specially applicable to royal gardens carefully irrigated and planted with choice trees; cf. Eccles. ii. 5, 6.

wither] See Ezek. xlvii. 12, a passage of great importance in its bearings upon this simile.

he doeth] This clause appears to revert from the simile to the godly man; but the word in Hebrew applies equally to the production of fruit; "whatsoever it produces;" and such is probably its meaning here, as in Jer. xvii. 8, where A. V. has "yielding" fruit.

shall prosper] Or, He shall make it prosper; as in Gen. xxxix. 23: to which there may possibly be here a reference.

4. *like the chaff*] Job xxi. 18; Ps. xxxv. 5.

5. *shall not stand*] Or, "rise up." They will be cast down, unable to stand in the presence of their Judge. Cf. Mal. iii. 2; see also Ps. v. 5, lxxvi. 7, and above all, Luke xxi. 36. The LXX. and the Vulg. render the word "rise again," alluding to the resurrection of the dead. The Hebrew word sometimes has this meaning, as in Job xiv. 12; Ps. lxxxviii. 10; Isai. xxvi. 14, 19 (see Rœdiger, Ges. 'Th.' p. 1204, § *g*), but it is not applicable here, since the wicked will rise for judgment; cf. John v. 29. The Targum gives what is probably the true meaning, "shall not be justified in the great day." Thus Rashi, "in the day of judgment."

in the congregation] The word is used repeatedly of the congregation of Israel in the Pentateuch. This passage is supposed by some commentators to mean simply that sinners will not be permitted to remain partakers of the privileges of the National Church; but the preceding clause, and the whole tenour of the context, point to the day of judgment, when the righteous will be completely and finally separated from evil-doers. Köster considers that this and the second psalm are placed at the head of the psalter because they present at once the two fundamental doctrines of the Hebrew Church, the judgment of God, and His Messiah.

6. *knoweth*] God's knowledge implies approval and love of those who strive to obey Him. Cf. Ps. xxxvii. 18.

the ungodly] Or, **wicked**. The recurrence of the word, used to denote evil men in the first verse of this psalm, should be observed.

Psalm II.

The Psalmist (*vv.* 1, 2) in a far-reaching vision sees Jehovah on His throne, and Mes-

2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, *saying*,

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siah entering upon His universal dominion. The enemies of both on earth rise up against them with frantic tumult, and vainly strive to cast off the fetters of their rule. Jehovah (*v.* 4), seated in the highest heaven, laughs them to scorn, and proclaims a decree of Messiah's dominion. In *v.* 7 Messiah Himself speaks, and tells of the Empire committed to Him, and of the fate which awaits all who oppose Him. In *v.* 10 the Psalmist addresses the refractory kings, and counsels wisdom, seeing the invincible might arrayed against them.

The ancient Jewish commentators describe the Messianic interpretation of this psalm as a common one. Kimchi says, "Some interpret this psalm of Gog and Magog, and the anointed is King Messiah: but it is more natural to suppose that David spake it concerning himself." Rashi makes a similar statement, but adds with singular candour: "In order to keep to the literal sense and answer the heretics (*i. e.* Christians), it is better to explain it of David himself." The Talmud, treatise 'Succah,' has a passage in which these words occur; "It is a tradition of the Rabbis that in *v.* 8 Messiah, the Son of David, said to him, 'Ask of me anything, and I will give it thee,' &c." Aben Ezra allows the application of the psalm to Messiah to be the best: "If the words of it," he says, "be applied to Messiah, the matter is clearer." The Jew in Justin Martyr ('Dial. with Trypho,' pp. 333, 401, edit. Thirl.) also refers the psalm to Messiah, but doubts its applicability to the suffering Messiah. Modern Jewish commentators deny the application to Messiah, and interpret the psalm of David exclusively. In the New Testament the psalm is referred to repeatedly as Messianic: in Acts iv. 25, the commencing verses are quoted as referring to the rising up against Christ of Pontius Pilate and the Jews: in Acts xiii. 33, *v.* 7 is referred to as accomplished in the resurrection; and again, in Hebrews i. 5, as intimating Christ's proper divinity. In Matt. xxvi. 63, the High Priest, in allusion to the same verse of the psalm, asks our Lord if He be Christ the Son of God; and Nathanael, John i. 49, apparently with the same reference, addresses Him with the words, "Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel." See also John vi. 69. So that no doubt can remain that in early days, before the Christian era, the psalm was regarded as Messianic.

Any attempt to explain it in reference to David, Solomon, Zerubbabel, or the Maccabees, is unsatisfactory. The words of the psalm are too great, its tone is too lofty, for any such application. The reply of Messiah, verse 7, when He takes up the word of Jehovah, could not be uttered by any man without an impious impropriety. The circumstances portrayed do not suit any known circumstances of the lives of any of the above-named princes. Messiah (*v.* 8) is Lord of the whole earth; His enemies (*v.* 3) are rebels: He is the Son of God (*v.* 7), in a peculiar mysterious sense; those who trust in Him (*v.* 12) are blessed (cf. Ps. cxlvi. 3, 5), and His anger (*v.* 12) is fatal, as that of God.

The words of the early Christians (Acts iv. 25) ascribe the psalm to David. Its place in the collection, its similarity to Ps. cx., its vigour, sublimity and insight, fall in with this teaching of Scripture and tradition. It should be noticed that critics of authority attribute the psalm to Solomon (Ewald, Paul., Bleek, &c.); to Hezekiah (Maur.); to Isaiah, or his times (Delitzsch); but, as it would seem, on slight grounds. A decree, in some sort adumbrating the decree in *v.* 7, is given in 2 S. vii. 14.

The application of the psalm is generally to Christ's triumph over His enemies, and the establishment of His universal Empire. In a vision such as this of the everlasting dominion of Messiah, it need not surprise us if all the circumstances which led to it—His humiliation, death, and suffering, ascension, sending down of the Spirit, &c.—are not embraced. Notices of His humble appearance, and of its attendant circumstances, seem to have been plainly revealed to psalmists and prophets in one form or other (Ps. xvi., etc.; Isai. liii., etc.), but would be out of place—may we say so—in this revelation of Christ triumphant.

1. *and the people*] Rather, "peoples," *i. e.* of many lands.

imagine] The marg. reads "meditate," which seems better; LXX. ἐμελέτησαν; Vulg. "meditati sunt." Aq. φθέγξεται κενῶς, recognizing the prophetic import: see Ps. i. 2, note. This word, as well as that employed before, *rage*, describes not action, but purpose.

a vain thing] *i. e.* a purpose which is nought, and will come to nought. The Psalmist, whose eyes are opened to the sight of Jehovah and Messiah, and to the comprehension of Their might, knows that all attempts against Them are vain.

2. *set themselves*] *i. e.* in posture of defiance, as Goliath did against the army of God, 1 S. xvii. 16—*against the* LORD, *and against his anointed.* The word "Messiah," rendered here "anointed," is commonly used of the theocratic King, 1 S. ii. 10, xii. 3, 5, xvi. 6, xxiv. 6, 10; 2 S. i. 14, 16, xix. 21,

3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

4 [b] He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.

5 Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and [f] vex them in his sore displeasure.

6 Yet have I [g] set my king [h] upon my holy hill of Zion.

7 I will declare [i] the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, [c] Thou *art* my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

8 [d] Ask of me, and I shall give *thee* the heathen *for* thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth *for* thy possession.

9 [e] Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

[b] Prov. 1. 26.

[f] Or, *trouble.*

[g] Heb. *anointed.*

[h] Heb. *upon Zion, the hill of my holiness.*

[i] Or, *for a decree.*

[c] Acts 13. 33. Hebr. 1. 5.

[d] Ps. 72. 8.

[e] Rev. 2. 27. & 19. 15.

&c.: of Cyrus, Isai. xlv. 1. The context shews that it is used here in an absolute special sense.

3. *Let us*, &c.] The words of the rebellious kings; *their bands*, *i. e.* the bands of Jehovah and Messiah. This image of "bands" and "cords" comes (Hupfeld, Moll, &c.) from yoked oxen eager to cast off the yoke, Isai. x. 27; Jer. xxx. 8; Nahum i. 13: transferred to prisoners in captivity, Ps. cvii. 14, &c. The sound of the original words and the rhythm express at once, so that we almost see and hear, the precipitancy and rage of the speakers.

4. *He that sitteth*, &c.] The action is rather present; Jehovah, Who dwells unapproachable in highest heaven, laughs, Ps. xxxvii. 13; the Lord (Adonai) scoffs at their vain enterprise: but

5. *Then*] Or, "Presently," when the fit time has come, in the midst of their vainglorious boasting, and as they advance to the assault (Deut. xxix. 19, 20), He speaks and acts; speaks to them in His wrath, and confounds in His manifest displeasure. Again the rhythm of the original, and choice of terms, suggest the idea, in the first clause, of thunder (Herder, &c.), or rather of a *Word* like rolling thunder, followed in the second clause by a deadly scattering lightning.

6. *Yet have I set*, &c.] Jehovah's word: lit. "And as for Me, I have set My king upon My holy mountain" (the emphasis is upon the pronoun). Zion is put for the seat and centre of Messiah's dominion; a vision of its future glory might appear to David, who took it from the Jebusites, and placed the ark there, 2 S. v. 7, 9, vi. 12; and 1 K. viii. 1. Some (Gesen., Ew., Umb., Zunz, &c.) render the words as in the margin, "I have anointed My king upon My holy hill of Zion," as if Zion were the spot upon which the king was anointed: but the rendering of the A.V. is defended by good authorities. Either rendering suits the Messianic exposition of the psalm equally well. David was anointed king, 1 S. xvi. 13; 2 S. v. 3, before he was possessed of Mount Zion: but the words in question can scarcely apply to him, even in the first instance. The LXX. and Vulg. interpret as if they were spoken by Messiah, "I have been set by Him as king upon Zion, His holy mountain."

7. *I will declare the decree*, &c.] Messiah, without preface, takes up the word of Jehovah. "I will tell," He says, "of a decree, an eternal, immutable decree, by which I reign. Jehovah said unto Me, Thou art My Son; not as all the Israelites (Ex. iv. 22, 23; Deut. xiv. 1) are sons, or as any king of Israel is a son; but My only Son, the Inheritor of My sovereign dominion." Compare Heb. i. 5. "This day have I, even I, begotten Thee; This day have I given to Thee, not existence, which is presupposed, but a new existence, a new career, a throne of the world, and of all that is, or will be, in it." What day? The day when the promised dominion over the world began, Acts xiii. 33; Rom. i. 4; or generally, the day on which Christ commenced the work, which eventuated in His everlasting dominion. The word translated in this and other passages "to beget" is in Hebrew used of either parent. It more strictly belongs to the mother, and denotes not the act of conception, but that of bringing forth. It is thence somewhat loosely transferred to the father, and signifies "to have a child born"—"to become the father of a living child." Applied to God, in His Parental relation, it would denote "to raise to life," or "to bring forth into life," &c. (Thrupp, Vol. I. p. 38). Kay interprets "The Day" as that day on which Christ was raised from the womb of the earth, the firstborn from the dead (Col. i. 18), and received the incommunicable prerogative of being heir of all things (Heb. i. 2). The word of Messiah extends to *v.* 9 inclusive.

9. *Thou shalt*, &c.] The rod or sceptre of authority, Ps. cx. 2, shall be of iron, to destroy and dash into pieces, like a potter's vessel, that cannot be mended, Jer. xix. 11. Some commentators (De Wette, Hupf., Rosenm., &c.) say of this verse that it cannot describe the mild rule of Christ in any stage of it. But similar descriptions of the ultimate fate of rebels proceed out of the lips of Christ

10 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

11 Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish *from* the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. ℣Blessed *are* all they that put their trust in him.

℣ Prov. 16. 20. Isai. 30. 18. Jer. 17. 7. Rom. 9. 33. & 10. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 6.

Himself, Matt. xxiv. 51; and the image of this verse is often employed in Rev. (ii. 27, xii. 5, xix. 15), to describe that fate. It must be noticed that the phrases used in the above places of the Apocalypse are from the LXX. It is easy to see how their translation arose; see Note; but there is no reason to doubt the received version.

10—12. *Be wise now*, &c.] Address of the Psalmist, who has heard the words of Jehovah and His Son. "Seeing that Jehovah and Messiah are irresistible, *be wise, ye kings*, before it is too late. *Rejoice*, as Jehovah is great and holy; *with trembling*, as He is omnipotent," Heb. xii. 28, 29. "*Kiss* (in token of homage, 1 S. x. 1; 1 K. xix. 18) *the Son, lest He* (the Son) *be angry, and ye perish in the way*, or, *journey in the way* of destruction." A stop:—

12. *Son*] The word rendered "Son" is unusual in this sense: it occurs three times in Prov. xxxi. 2. The versions, LXX., Vulg., Targum, Aq., Sym., Jer., &c. (see Note below), render as if the reading were different, or the word had a different import. The Syr. renders "Kiss the Son" as the A. V., and with it agree some Jewish commentators, as Aben Ezra and Maimonides. In more recent times, Mendelssohn, Gesenius, Fürst, De Wette, Rosenm., Umbreit, and, still more recently, Zunz, agree with the Syriac. No explanation is free from difficulties. The phrase seems emphatic and poetical. The introduction of the Son in *v.* 7 makes a recurrence to His separate dignity to be expected: and the propitiation of Jehovah in *v.* 11 leads naturally to a mention of some homage to be paid to the Son. The absence of the article in the original is emphatic. "A Son," as if none could doubt what Son and Whose Son is intended. So *v.* 7, Heb., "a decree," as if none could doubt what decree. If this translation be adopted, it is unnatural to introduce, in *vv.* 11, 12, any subject except the Son: it is He that may be angry; it is His wrath that is sometimes kindled; they are blessed that take refuge in Him.

from the way] Rather, in *or* on the way. See Exod. xxx. 3.

when his wrath is kindled, &c.] Lit. "For His wrath may suddenly, or, for an instant, kindle. (Then) blessed are they that trust, or find refuge in Him."

We may notice (as above mentioned) the correspondence between the picture presented to us in *vv.* 9, 10, &c. and Rev. vi. At the last Messiah's enemies will be destroyed: and possibly His appearance as king and judge will occasion as much surprise to some, as His first appearance in lowliness and humility occasioned to the Jews in his own day. The last verse of the psalm, Calvin remarks, relieves the severity of verses 9, 10, 11: "If His wrath be kindled, and suddenly blaze forth, then blessed are they who trust in Him, and are safe."

NOTES on PSALM II. 9, 12.

9. תְּרֹעֵם, "thou shalt break;" from רעע; instead of which the LXX., perhaps with reference to Micah vii. 14, read תִּרְעֵם from רעה.

12. LXX. *δράξασθε παιδείας*; Vulg. "apprehendite disciplinam," as if בר meant "discipline;" Targum, "receive instruction." Aquila, *καταφιλήσατε ἐκλεκτῶς*; Sym., *προσκυνήσατε καθαρῶς*; Jer. "adorate pure," as if בר were adv.: but in his Comm. "adorate filium."

PSALM III.

The security of God's protection.

A Psalm of David, *when he fled from Absalom his son.* *2 Sam. 15. 5.

LORD, how are they increased that trouble me! many *are* they that rise up against me.

2 Many *there be* which say of my

PSALM III.

This is the first psalm which is ascribed in the title to David, and the only one in this book which is expressly assigned to the period of his flight from Absalom. It describes in vivid colours the perils of the king, and the exultation of his enemies; but the expressions of confidence and triumph towards the end shew that it was composed shortly before his restoration.

Hitzig refers it to an earlier period, chiefly because there is no allusion to an unnatural son; Ewald disposes of the objection on the

soul, *There is* no help for him in God. Selah.

3 But thou, O LORD, *art* a shield ‖ for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.

‖ Or, *about.*

4 I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah.

[a] Ps. 4. 8. 5 [a] I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me.

6 [b] I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set *themselves* against me round about.

[b] Ps. 27. 3

7 Arise, O LORD; save me, O my God: for thou hast smitten all mine enemies *upon* the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.

8 [c] Salvation *belongeth* unto the LORD: thy blessing *is* upon thy people. Selah.

[c] Isai. 43. 11. Hos. 13. 4

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ground stated in the introduction to the following psalm. The internal evidence of Davidic authorship is recognized by both critics.

The structure is regular, four divisions, each with two verses of equal length (with one exception, *v.* 7): three are distinctly marked by Selah, the other not less clearly by the following ejaculation, *v.* 7. From the 5th verse, and from the general tenour of the psalm, it is inferred that it was composed for a morning song: thus Ps. iv. is an evening song; in both the number of verses is the same. The Hebrew word for psalm in the inscription, and the frequent use of the musical term Selah, may imply that it was used in the liturgical service of the temple.

1. *are they increased*] Thus 2 S. xv. 12, "The conspiracy was strong, for the people increased continually with Absalom." Thus too 2 S. xvi. 15, "Absalom, and all the people the men of Israel."

rise up against me] Cf. Ps. xviii. 39.

2. *of my soul*] The word soul is used commonly in place of the personal pronoun; but it has a special emphasis in this and similar passages. David clave to the Lord with his soul; his soul is the object against which attacks are aimed, and which feels the bitterness of the reproach, knowing that his own sin had given occasion to the calamity. Cf. Ps. lxxi. 10.

help] *Salvation* better expresses the Hebrew, which includes deliverance from all evils, spiritual or temporal. LXX. σωτηρία, Jerome, "salus." It may be remarked that David uses both names, God (Elohim), and Jehovah (see *v.* 8), in reference to salvation, but the first name is put into the mouth of his enemies, the second is taken as the expression of his own innermost feelings. The names are too frequently interchanged to justify any general assertion; but this and similar passages indicate that a nearer, more directly personal, or covenanted, relation is involved in the name Jehovah.

Selah] A word of doubtful origin; it is generally agreed that it is a musical term, probably for a sweep of harp-strings, marking a pause. See appendix to Introd.

3. *a shield for me*] Or, **a shield about me**, as in the margin. Cf. Gen. xv. 1, a passage to which frequent reference is found in the psalms: see also Job i. 10. Ewald remarks the appropriateness of this metaphor in the mouth of David. "The hero accustomed to battle and victory lives and breathes in warlike thoughts and associations." Cf. *v.* 6.

4. *I cried*, &c.] The Hebrew has "My voice unto Jehovah I cry;" an expression which is understood to mean, "I cry out incessantly in my trouble." Thus Hupf., Hitz., &c. Cf. Ps. lxxvii. 1, cxlii. 1.

out of his holy hill] Although David is in exile, far from Jerusalem, and therefore, as his enemies might boast, unable to approach the holy hill of Zion (cf. Ps. ii. 6), he knows that God hears and answers his prayer. The expression may not prove, but it supports, the traditional origin of the psalm.

5. *I laid me down*] The word "I" is emphasized in the Hebrew. I for my part, as though contrasting his feelings of trust and peace with those of others less confident of salvation in God.

sustained] **Sustaineth**: the change of tense marks the sense of an abiding support.

6. *ten thousands*] Or, "myriads." David was surrounded on all sides by revolted subjects.

set themselves] Or, "arrayed themselves:" a military term, as in Isai. xxii. 7. This passage is conclusive against the supposition that the psalm was composed by a mere private individual.

7. *Arise*] See Num. x. 35: "Arise, O Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered;" a passage to which there are numerous references in the Davidic psalms; *e. g.* vii. 6, ix. 19, x. 12, xvii. 13, lxviii. 1.

thou hast smitten] At once a grateful remembrance of past mercies, and a confident anticipation of immediate deliverance.

cheek bone] The jaw. David's enemies are compared to wild beasts; doubtless with reference to his own early experience. See note on Ps. xxiii. 1, and 1 S. xvii. 34—36. The sternness of the expression befits the restorer of order; thus Ewald.

8. *thy blessing is*] The Hebrew has "Thy blessing upon thy people:" an exclamation

PSALM IV.

1 David prayeth for audience. 2 He reproveth and exhorteth his enemies. 6 Man's happiness is in God's favour.

To the ‖chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm of David.

‖ Or, *overseer.*

HEAR me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me *when I was* in distress; ‖ have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.

‖ Or, *be gracious unto me.*

2 O ye sons of men, how long *will ye turn* my glory into shame? *how long* will ye love vanity, *and* seek after leasing? Selah.

3 But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him.

4 Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.

5 Offer [a] the sacrifices of righte-

[a] Ps. 50. 14. & 51. 19.

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which has the force of a prayer. The kingly heart of David cannot separate his personal deliverance from that of his people. His love is not quenched by their revolt: though misled, they are to him still God's people: compare the close of Ps. xxviii.

PSALM IV.

This is an evening psalm (see *v.* 8), and its close connection with the preceding makes it probable that it was composed at the same period, it may be on the evening of the same day. Some expressions in the psalm may seem to point rather to the period of the persecution of David by Saul (*vv.* 4, 7); but they are quite compatible with that of his flight from Absalom. There is little force in the objection that there is no allusion to his rebellious son. David loved Absalom dearly, and doubtless regarded him as an instrument in the hands of Ahithophel. In accordance with the tone of the last verse in Ps. iii., there are in this no imprecations or even prayers against his foes, but exhortations to his followers, such as they specially needed at that time of trial.

Köster observes the close resemblance between this and the preceding psalm in structure, form of thought, and language: both, as he says, *undoubtedly* of David.

The psalm may be divided into four parts: a prayer, *v.* 1; a reproof to his enemies, 2, 3; exhortation to his friends, 4, 5; a contrast between their despondency and the gladness, peace, and security of God's faithful servant, 6—8.

Neginoth] The word denotes an accompaniment of stringed instruments: see note on 2 S. vi. 5.

1. *O God of my righteousness*] *i.e.* from whom my righteousness comes, who makes me upright, and who will justify me. Cf. Isai. liv. 17; Jer. xxiii. 6. David refers to his condition at the time, as though he would say, God who gave me righteousness will prove that I am righteous by delivering me: thus in *v.* 3 he is sure of an answer to prayer on the grounds of God's election and his own piety.

thou hast enlarged me] Or, "hast made room for me," as in Gen. xxvi. 22; see also note on Ps. xviii. 36. A common salutation in Arabic is "space (the same word) and ease to thee." In former deliverances from great straits, David here, as in the preceding psalm, recognizes a pledge of present help.

2. *sons of men*] The Hebrew idiom is equivalent to "sirs," and implies that the persons so addressed had certain claims to distinction; there may be a touch of irony, men of birth and station, but men after all, men of the world in mind and feeling. As Dr Kay observes, the admonition was needed hardly less by Joab, Abishai, and others of David's own party, than by Absalom's followers. Cf. 2 S. xix. 5—7.

my glory into shame] This may apply to either period to which the psalm is assigned, but has a peculiar fitness in the mouth of the dishonoured king. The construction, however, is elliptical, and a different reading was followed by the LXX., How long will ye be heavy, *i.e.* stubborn in heart? See Note below.

leasing] Or, "falsehood;" the characteristic of the conspirators; see 2 S. xv. 1—9.

3. *hath set apart*] The rendering is literal, but the original implies peculiar and marvellous favour shewn in the election of the godly man. Critics generally follow the LXX., rendering the clause "He hath done marvellously to His godly one," but Hupfeld shews the correctness of the construction adopted in the A. V. The term "godly" is, so to speak, the technical designation of the pious, equivalent to "saints" in the New Testament.

4. *Stand in awe*] Or, "tremble." This appears to be the meaning of the word; but the translation of the LXX. and Vulg. (ὀργίζεσθε, "irascimini," thus too Aq. and Symm.), "be ye angry," is defended by Dr Kay, and appears to be accepted by St Paul, Eph. iv. 26. In either case it may be taken as an exhortation to the followers of David, who needed greatly the warning against presumption and fierceness.

commune] See Ps. lxxvii. 6. Note the antithesis, "speak in your heart, but be silent."

ousness, and put your trust in the LORD.

6 *There be* many that say, Who will shew us *any* good? LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.

7 Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time *that* their corn and their wine increased.

8 [b]I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety. [b] Ps. 3. 5.

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upon your bed] This is the first indication of the hour, at eventide.

5. *sacrifices of righteousness*] Possibly alluding to the sacrifices offered in unrighteousness, as by Absalom, 2 S. xv. 7—9; but the expression appears rather to apply to religious services in general; see Ps. l. 14, li. 19; Deut. xxxiii. 19. David's followers could not offer the legal sacrifices in exile.

6. *many that say*] The statement may be taken generally, but it applies specially to the discouraged and desponding adherents of David.

lift thou up] Compare the blessing to be pronounced by Aaron and his sons, Num. vi. 24—26; see also Ps. xxxi. 16, and the refrain of Ps. lxxx., 3, 7, 19.

7. *their corn and their wine*] Note the clear reference in this and the next verse to Deut. xxxiii. 28. David's enemies have the material, he has the spiritual, privileges of God's people; thus, again, in the next verse, the Psalmist adopts the words of Deut. xxxiii. 12, "the beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by Him." The mention of corn and wine may possibly indicate the season of David's flight, which was in early autumn; see 2 S. xvi. 1, and xvii. 19.

8. *I will both*] Lit. "together," *i.e.* as soon as I lie down, sweet sleep will refresh me. Cf. Job xi. 18, 19.

only] The same expression as Deut. xxxii. 12, "the LORD alone did lead him." With the last words compare Deut. xxxiii. 28, "Israel then shall dwell in safety alone;" see also Lev. xxv. 18, 19; Deut. xii. 10. The Syriac connects the word "alone" with David.

NOTE on PSALM IV. 2.

The LXX. ἕως πότε βαρυκάρδιοι; ἱνατί κ.τ.λ. עַר־מָה כְּבֹדִי לָב לָמָּה. This requires the suppression of ו, very common in the MSS., and the change of one letter, לָב for לְכָ. The reading clears the construction of both clauses. "How long will ye be hard of heart? Why will ye love vanity?" The Syr. had a different reading for לְכַלְמָה; "will ye hide?"

PSALM V.

1 *David prayeth, and professeth his study in prayer.* 4 *God favoureth not the wicked.* 7 *David, professing his faith, prayeth unto God to guide him,* 10 *to destroy his enemies,* 11 *and to preserve the godly.*

To the chief Musician upon Nehiloth,
A Psalm of David.

GIVE ear to my words, O LORD, consider my meditation.

2 Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray.

3 [a]My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morn- [a] Ps. 130. 6.

PSALM V.

This psalm must have been composed at Jerusalem, since David had access to the house of God; see *v.* 7; probably a short time before the open revolt of Absalom, when the king was aware of the machinations of conspirators under a bloodthirsty and treacherous chief, *v.* 6. Like Ps. iii. it is a morning song, *v.* 3. The style is thoroughly Davidic, concise, vigorous, with rapid transitions of thought and feeling. The only word which has been relied upon as indicating a later date is "temple," *v.* 7, which, however, in the Hebrew is applied to the tabernacle; see note on *v.* 7. The psalm is divided into four parts, each consisting of six lines, or three complete metres. i. The morning prayer (1—3). ii. and iii. The grounds for hope; first, that God abhors wickedness (4—6), and secondly, that David seeks God and trusts in His guidance (7, 8). iv. The guilt of David's enemies, with prayer for their overthrow, 9—12.

upon Nehiloth] Rather, "to Nehiloth:" a word which probably means an accompaniment of flutes.

1. *meditation*] The word occurs but twice, here and Ps. xxxix. 3. It signifies gentle, half-inward utterance, a thought inwardly

ing will I direct *my prayer* unto thee, and will look up.

4 For thou *art* not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee.

† Heb. *before thine eyes.*

5 The foolish shall not stand †in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity.

6 Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will abhor † Heb. *the man of bloods and deceit.* †the bloody and deceitful man.

† Heb. *the temple of thy holiness.*

7 But as for me, I will come *into* thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: *and* in thy fear will I worship toward †thy holy temple.

8 Lead me, O LORD, in thy right- † Heb. *those which observe me.* eousness because of †mine enemies; make thy way straight before my face.

‖ Or, *stedfastness.*

9 For *there is* no ‖faithfulness †in their mouth; their inward part *is* †very wickedness; [b]their throat *is* an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue.

† Heb. *in his mouth, that is, in the mouth of any of them.*

† Heb. *wickednesses.*

[b] Rom. 3. 13.

10 ‖Destroy thou them, O God; let them fall ‖by their own counsels; cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee.

‖ Or, *Make them guilty.*

‖ Or, *from their counsels.*

11 But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever

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clothed in words, and softly uttered; Jerome has "murmur."

2. *my King*] The expression has a special suitableness in the mouth of the earthly representative of the King of kings. Cf. Ps. lxxxiv. 3. It is used specifically of God as the King of the Theocracy; cf. Ps. x. 16.

3. *in the morning*] The word, twice repeated, is emphatic; not merely every morning, but in the morning, as a special hour for sacred acts, for the offering of the daily sacrifice, see Job i. 5, and public prayer.

will I direct] Or, **will I set in order.** The Hebrew word is used specially of laying the wood, or the limbs of victims, on the altar. Prayer is thus represented as a spiritual sacrifice, to be offered with careful preparation. It is a function of the spiritual priesthood inherent in God's people, Ex. xix. 6; 1 Pet. ii. 9; Rev. i. 6. On prayer as incense, see Ps. cxli. 2.

will look up] Or, **look out,** as a watchman, or sentinel. It represents the Psalmist as watching in spirit the ascent of the prayer, an acceptable sacrifice, and expecting the answer. Cf. Mic. vii. 7, where "unto the LORD" completes the meaning.

5. *foolish*] Or, "boasters." The word includes the meaning of empty boasting. Cf. Ps. lxxiii. 3.

workers of iniquity] Men who make evil their business or trade; an expression which occurs frequently in Job and the Prophets. Cf. Ps. vi. 8, xiv. 4, &c.

6. *bloody and deceitful man*] Or, **a man of blood and guile.** The expression points to an individual, probably to Ahithophel. "Blood," lit. bloods, as elsewhere in the sense of murder. Cf. Ps. xxvi. 9, lv. 23, where it is connected, as here, with guile.

7. *thy house*] The tabernacle is called the house of the Lord in Josh. vi. 24 and 2 S. xii. 20. The word rendered "temple," in the next clause, is also applied to the tabernacle in 1 S. i. 9 (where see note), and iii. 3. At a later period it is used specially of the Priests' court in the Temple, and very frequently of the Temple itself. It means properly a Palace; in this and similar passages it denotes the abode of the great King, an expression equally applicable to the tabernacle, whether, as at Shiloh, surrounded by a wall, or, as in the time of David, standing as a tent on the Holy Mount. Cf. Ps. xi. 4, xviii. 6; in Ps. xxvii., verse 4 compared with 6 shews that tabernacle and temple were convertible terms. Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch; see also Ges. 'Thes.' p. 376.

9. *faithfulness*] Or, "trustworthiness;" firm principle on which one can rely. In Ps. li. 10, the word is applied to the spirit, "a right spirit;" in lvii. 7, to the heart, "my heart is fixed."

wickedness] The Hebrew word means a yawning abyss, hence, destruction, or, as a characteristic of an evil man, malice: beneath the fair show of duty there is a fathomless depth of malice. See note on Job vi. 30. The word (*havvoth*) occurs only in Job, Prov. and Psalms. In Arabic it is used specially of hell.

they flatter with their tongue] Or, **they make their tongue smooth.** The image appears to be taken from a serpent. Its prey slips over the smooth tongue. Cf. Prov. xxviii. 23. Or "tongue" is taken simply for words, as in Prov. ii. 16, "she maketh her words smooth;" cf. Ps. lv. 21.

10. *Destroy thou them*] Lit. **Declare them guilty.** Punishment follows of course, but is not expressed. Thus Hupfeld, and Kay, "declare their guilt," which is less forcible. LXX. *κρίνον αὐτούς.*

by their own counsels] As a direct result of their own machinations. The marginal rendering "from," or "out of," their own counsels, *i.e.* let their counsels be frustrated, is preferred by some commentators, and has

shout for joy, because † thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.

† Heb. *thou covertest over*, or, *protectest them.*

12 For thou, LORD, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou † compass him as *with* a shield.

† Heb. *crown him.*

PSALM VI.

1 *David's complaint in his sickness.* 8 *By faith he triumpheth over his enemies.*

To the chief Musician on Neginoth † upon Sheminith, A Psalm of David.

† Or, *upon the eighth.*

O [a] LORD, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.

[a] Ps. 38. 1.

2 Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I *am* weak: O LORD, heal me; for my bones are vexed.

3 My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O LORD, how long?

4 Return, O LORD, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake.

5 [b] For in death *there is* no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?

[b] Ps. 30. 9. & 88. 11. & 115. 17. & 118. 17. Isai. 38. 18.

6 I am weary with my groaning; † all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears.

† Or, *every night.*

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the authority of the Ancient Versions, LXX., Vulg., Syr. For the fulfilment see 2 S. xvii. 23.

for they, &c.] David thus assigns the true motive and justification for imprecations directed against the open enemies of the King, Whom he represents; see note, *v.* 2.

11. *because thou defendest them*] Or, **and do thou shelter them.** The shelter may refer to a tent, or overhanging wings.

12. *compass him*] *i.e.* surround, as with the large shield which covered the whole body.

PSALM VI.

This is the first of the penitential psalms. It was composed in a season of extreme depression, probably when the Psalmist was dangerously sick, and receiving accounts which made him anticipate an open outbreak of rebellion. Such an illness is not mentioned in the historical books, but there are plain and very numerous allusions to it in the psalms, as for instance: Pss. xviii. 5, xxii. 14, xxv. 18, xxx. 2, 7—9, xxxi. 9, 10, xxxviii. 7, xli. and xlii. It harmonizes also with the transactions preceding the revolt of Absalom, whose machinations could scarcely have gone on so openly had not David been for a season unable to discharge his kingly duties; see 2 S. xv. 1—6. The sickness is undoubtedly regarded by the Psalmist as part of the chastisement due to the great crime, which brought disgrace and misery upon his latter years.

There are three divisions clearly marked; the first, 1—3, and the last, 8—10, have each three lines; the middle, 4—7, has four.

Neginoth] See above on Ps. iv.

Sheminith] See 1 Chro. xv. 21. It occurs again in the title of a penitential psalm, xii. Upon the eighth (see marg.) or "octave" probably means with a bass voice, or accompaniment.

1. *O LORD*] David uses the name Jehovah exclusively in this psalm. He has no hope but in the grace of which that name is a pledge. Rebuke, anger, chasten, displeasure—each word involves an acknowledgment of deep guilt. David feels that his sin has found him out. Cf. Ps. xxxviii. 1. Jeremiah adopts the expressions; see ch. x. 24, xxx. 11, xlvi. 28. Our blessed Lord uses them as our representative, bearing the burden and penalty of our sins, see note on *v.* 3.

2. *heal me*] Cf. Ps. xxx. 2, xli. 4; Jer. xvii. 14, and xxx. 17.

I am weak] The word implies exhaustion, a drooping as of a blighted plant.—Kay.

my bones] As in Job, this denotes a disease penetrating the whole frame, and causing excruciating anguish. Cf. Job iv. 14, xxx. 17, 30, xxxiii. 19—21.

3. *My soul*] The soul, conscious of guilt, suffers exceedingly, far more than the tortured body. "Vexed," in this and in the preceding verse, scarcely expresses the force of the Hebrew, which implies extreme terror and dismay. See Ps. xxx. 7. The LXX. use the word ἐταράχθη, adopted by our Lord, Joh. xii. 27, "now is my soul troubled."

4. *Return*] Cf. Ps. xc. 13, where both clauses are represented: "Return, O Lord, how long?" See also Ps. lxxiv. 9, 10, where "how long?" is the key-note.

5. *no remembrance*] David speaks of those who die, not being delivered and saved; see *v.* 4. For such there is no opportunity to celebrate the mercy of God, or to give Him thanks. But under the old dispensation a veil hung over the intermediate state of the departed. David knew that life was the season for serving God, and that knowledge sufficed for practical purposes until the life and immortality, dimly anticipated by the Patriarchs, were brought to light by Christ. The cessation of active service, even of remembrance or devotion, does not affect the question of a future restoration. Even the Saviour saith, "The night cometh when no man can work." On the proofs that the Psalmist looked for

7 Mine eye is consumed because of grief; it waxeth old because of all mine enemies.

c Matth. 7. 23. & 25. 41. Luke 13. 27.

8 c Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the LORD hath heard the voice of my weeping.

9 The LORD hath heard my supplication; the LORD will receive my prayer.

10 Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed: let them return *and* be ashamed suddenly.

PSALM VII.

1 *David prayeth against the malice of his enemies, professing his innocency.* 10 *By faith he seeth his defence, and the destruction of his enemies.*

Shiggaion of David, which he sang unto the LORD, concerning the ‖words of Cush the Benjamite. ‖ Or, *business.*

O LORD my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me:

2 Lest he tear my soul like a lion,

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such restoration, see Introduction, § 18, and notes on Ps. xvi. Compare this verse with Ps. xxx. 9, and Isai. xxxviii. 18.

in the grave] In Sheol, Hades, the unseen world. See note on Job x. 21.

6. *make I my bed to swim*] The translation is literal, and expresses the true sense of the Hebrew. Compare Homer, 'Od.' XVII. 102, 3, λέξομαι εἰς εὐνὴν ἥ μοι στονόεσσα τέτυκται, αἰεὶ δάκρυσ' ἐμοῖσι πεφυρμένη.

water] Or, "drench."

7. *consumed*] **Wastes away**, as a garment fretted by moths. Ps. xxxi. 9; cf. Job xvii. 7.

grief] The word is used frequently in Job (see notes on ch. v. 2, vi. 2), and means properly the grief caused by severe or unjust treatment: the next clause explains the specific cause; that which made his prolonged confinement so hard to bear was that his enemies were seducing his people, and maturing their plots.

waxeth old] Thus Theocritus, "they who are longing grow old in a day:" οἱ δὲ ποθεῦντες ἐν ἤματι γηράσκουσι. 'Id.' XII. 2.

8. *Depart*, &c.] The sudden change of tone is characteristic of David. There is no interval between the struggle and its result. No sooner does he feel that his prayer has reached the Lord than he is assured of its efficacy.

9. *The LORD hath heard*] This word, twice repeated, gives the fact, the next clause, "will receive," *i.e.* accept and grant, states the effect, of the prayer, which is represented as an accepted sacrifice. Cf. Ps. v. 3. Thus Hupfeld.

10. *Let all*] Or, All mine enemies **shall be ashamed—shall turn back**. Here, as in the preceding psalm, our version, following the LXX. and Jerome, substitutes a prayer for an assertion: David simply states his certainty of the result.

sore vexed] The same word which David used to describe his own misery, *v.* 3.

The close is firm, compact, with a ring as of clashing swords.

PSALM VII.

This psalm is generally admitted to belong to the early life of David, when at the court of Saul he was calumniated by the courtiers of the king, whose jealousy and malice were becoming manifest. His chief enemy is represented as a person of great influence, and his own position is evidently one that exposed him to envy. There are indications that the persecution had continued some time, and was likely to continue. The psalm is remarkable for vivacity, rapid and vigorous transitions, and vivid imagery — points recognized by Ewald and other critics as marking a genuine production of David's youth. Dr Kay, however, refers it, chiefly on the ground of connection with other psalms, to the period of the king's flight, with special reference to the curses of Shimei; thus too Mr Thrupp.

The structure of this psalm is disputed. The first part of five verses closes with Selah. Ewald divides the remainder (at *v.* 11) into two parts, each of six verses; but the last verse stands probably alone, as an ejaculation; thus Köster.

Shiggaion] A musical term, which probably denotes a lyrical composition expressing mental excitement. The Arabic word for lyric poems appears to be connected with it; but the etymology is uncertain.

Cush] The name does not occur in the book of Samuel, a fact which points to the independence, and probably also, as Ewald observes, to the antiquity of this inscription. It designates some partizan of Saul's own tribe, one who shared the suspicion and envy of the king. It has been supposed to designate the king himself, but it seems to be a proper name. Its meaning, "Ethiopian," may possibly refer to some personal characteristic, darkness of soul, or of complexion; cf. Jer. xiii. 23; Amos ix. 7.

2. *Lest he*] The same sudden change from the plural to the singular has been noticed in Ps. v. 6; see also xvii. 11, 12. Among David's enemies one took the lead. This may refer to Saul, of whom it might most naturally be

rending *it* in pieces, while *there is* † none to deliver.

† Heb. *not a deliverer.*

3 O LORD my God, if I have done this; if there be iniquity in my hands;

4 If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me; (yea, I have delivered him that without cause is mine enemy:)

5 Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take *it;* yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust. Selah.

6 Arise, O LORD, in thine anger, lift up thyself because of the rage of mine enemies: and awake for me *to* the judgment *that* thou hast commanded.

7 So shall the congregation of the people compass thee about: for their sakes therefore return thou on high.

8 The LORD shall judge the people: judge me, O LORD, [a] according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity *that is* in me.

9 Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: [b] for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.

10 † My defence *is* of God, which saveth the upright in heart.

11 ‖ God judgeth the righteous,

[a] Ps. 18. 20
[b] 1 Sam. 16. 7. 1 Chron. 28. 9. Ps. 139. 1. Jer. 11. 20 & 17. 10. & 20. 12.

† Heb. *My buckler* is *upon God.*

‖ Or, *God* is *a righteous judge.*

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said that he was like a lion, from whom there could be no man to deliver. It could scarcely apply to Shimei, whose weapons were simply railings. Compare Job x. 16. The expressions recall David's early experience, 1 S. xvii. 34—37.

3. *this*] David alludes first to the charge in general, this thing of which I am accused, then specifies it more distinctly as a criminal act (idiomatically evil, or iniquity, in the hand, as the instrument of crime; cf. 1 S. xxiv. 12, 13), then as one of base ingratitude and treachery. Such accusations accord with his position at Saul's court, and with the well-known suspicions of the king, but can scarcely be explained with reference to David's flight from Absalom.

4. *I have delivered*] This interpretation has been questioned, but is defended by able critics; and whether or not it may refer to the transactions related in 1 S. xxiv. 4, 7, and xxvi. 9, when David twice spared Saul's life, it truly expresses his generous character. Dr Kay renders the word "displaced;" but the meaning, "delivered," belongs properly to the Hebrew verb, and is accepted by Ewald and Hupfeld (who regard it as the only sense justified by Hebrew usage), after Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and several modern critics, as Calvin, Mich., Ros., Thol., Köster.

5. *mine honour*] Or, "glory," as in Ps. iv. 2. Either word may be accepted, but one only should be used. This passage supports the Masoretic text in that psalm. The sense of personal dignity at so early a period in David's life is remarkable, the word (*cabod*) occurs frequently in psalms composed by the king. See Introd.

6. *awake for me*] The A. V. follows the old versions, but the construction, though not free from doubt, seems rather to be "awake for me, Thou hast ordained judgment." Thus Hupfeld and others. Cf. Job viii. 6.

7. *compass*] Our version is literal, and gives probably the true sense, viz. In that case the whole body of the people will come around Thee, recognizing Thee as the righteous Judge.

for their sakes] Or, **above it**, *i.e.* over the congregation. God is represented as pronouncing this sentence from His throne over the assembly, and then returning on high. Cf. Ps. lxviii. 18. Every triumph of right is regarded by David as the result of a personal intervention of the righteous Judge.

8. *judge me*, &c.] Cf. Ps. xviii. 20, xxvi. 1, xxxv. 24, where the Psalmist has "according to Thy righteousness."

integrity] *i.e.* freedom from guilt with reference to the special charge.

in me] Or, **upon me**, as a robe. Cf. Job xxix. 14: "I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my judgment was as a robe and a diadem." This construction is quite in accordance with Hebrew usage (Hupf.), and seems preferable to another which has been proposed, "let it be done to me." The consciousness of integrity is frequently asserted by David, and more especially with reference to early accusations; such assertion is justified by St Paul's declaration that touching the righteousness, which is by the law, he was blameless. Phil. iii. 6.

9. *trieth*] In the specific sense of testing, assaying; cf. Ps. xi. 5; Job xxiii. 10.

the hearts and reins] "The heart," as the seat of the understanding and the will, "the reins," of natural impulses and affections, both in contrast to mere outward appearances. Cf. Ps. xxvi. 2, and see 1 S. xvi. 7.

10. *My defence is of God*] Or, **My shield is upon God**; an expression which may denote that his shield or defence depends upon God, that he trusts to God to hold His shield over him, or that he commits his

and God is angry *with the wicked* every day.

12 If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready.

13 He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.

14 [c]Behold, he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood.

15 [†]He made a pit, and digged it, [d]and is fallen into the ditch *which* he made.

16 His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.

17 I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high.

[c] Job 15. 35. Isai. 59. 4. James 1. 15.
[†] Heb. *He hath digged a pit.*
[d] Ps. 9. 15. & 10. 2. Prov. 5. 22.

PSALM VIII.

God's glory is magnified by his works, and by his love to man.

To the chief Musician upon Gittith, A Psalm of David.

O LORD our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

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defence to God, taking "upon" in the not uncommon sense of "incumbent upon."

11. The meaning of the verse, as in marg., appears to be, God is a righteous judge (hence the confidence of the righteous man), and as such He is wrathful every day. The word rendered "angry" means not merely that God feels, but that He manifests, wrath, not by occasional outbursts, but by continuous indications of His intent to punish those who continually provoke Him.

12. *made it ready*] Lit. **set it upright**, or fixed it. When the bow is bent and strung the warrior places it in the proper position. The resemblance of this passage to Deut. xxxii. 41, 42 is very striking; it has the same metaphor, and in the same order. God executing His work of judgment is there represented as a warrior, who first whets his glittering sword, and then satiates his arrows with blood.

13. *for him*] *i.e.* for the sinner.

he ordaineth...persecutors] This translation is defensible, and follows some ancient Versions. The Hebrew word occurs frequently in the sense "pursuer;" see Gen. xxxi. 36; 1 S. xvii. 53; Ps. x. 2. A more striking image is however presented by an exact rendering, **He maketh His arrows fiery ones.** This is adopted generally by modern commentators, and is supposed to allude to the old custom of covering arrow-heads with tow dipped in naphtha, which caught fire in passing through the air; cf. Ephes. vi. 16. They were used specially in attacking strongholds, as shells in bombardments, setting buildings on fire. It is to be observed that God is here represented not as actually striking, but as preparing to strike. The sinner, who disregards general warnings, may be alarmed by indications of imminent destruction.

14. *he travaileth*] The sinner, against whom God directs His arrows, is represented in the very act of perpetrating crime, previously conceived, and issuing afterwards in a lie. The Hebrew word for lie includes the meaning of emptiness and failure.

15. *He made a pit, and digged it*] Or, **He dug a pit, and scooped it out.**

16. The metaphor seems to be continued: while the sinner is in the pit, which he is digging, the mass of evil which he had thrown up falls in and crushes him.

come down] *i.e.* fall in; see note on Job xvii. 16.

PSALM VIII.

A psalm in praise of Jehovah, Whose glory is seen in the heaven above and the earth beneath, and in His care for the least of His creatures, *v.* 1. The sight of the starry skies suggests at the first glance the thought of God's unapproachable majesty and man's insignificance; but a deeper meditation confirms the assurance that God cares for man as for His chiefest work, *vv.* 3, 4, having crowned him with glory, and set all things under him, and made him His vicegerent. This idea is the point of the psalm, which is, so to say, a poetical meditation upon the description, in Gen. i., of man's creation and original estate with God.

The hypothesis, founded on *v.* 3 (in which the moon and stars only are mentioned), that David wrote this psalm at night, as he fed his flocks at Bethlehem (1 S. xvii. 15), is improbable, cf. Job xxv. 5, and needless. The thought suggested by the sight of the heavens, of God's majesty and man's littleness, is inevitable; and must have occurred to David not only in his earliest days, but often in his chequered life.

The words of the psalm have a magical charm. Though few and simple they carry us far beyond the images expressed, and suggest a world of thoughts and sentiments not expressed, which seem indeed only to be fully explained and realized by a reference to Christ the Son of Man, and Son of God, and man's Ideal in humiliation and glory.

2 [a] Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou [†] ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

3 When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

4 [b] What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

5 For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

6 Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands;

[a] Matth. 21. 16. [†] Heb. *founded.*

[b] Job 7. 17. Ps. 144. 3. Hebr. 2. 6.

It is uncertain what instrument is intended, or what strain of music, by Gittith; it seems to have been employed on joyful stirring occasions of praise and thanksgiving (Pss. lxxxi., lxxxiv.). The Greeks had a Dorian lyre and also a Dorian melody; and Gittith may be a lyre or melody of Gath. See 1 S. xxvii. 2, 3, 4.

The Psalmist sings (*v.* 1) the praises of Jehovah in his own name, and in that of all instructed beholders of His works.

1. *thy name*] The meaning is not simply, "How excellent art Thou in Thine essential attributes of holiness, goodness, and majesty," but, "How excellent in name and fame; how excellent in Thine adorable attributes, exhibited and made known, as they are, in Thine outward works!" *Vv.* 1, 2 express concisely and abruptly, after the manner of Hebrew poetry, the idea of God's majesty and wondrous condescension, which is repeated in full terms, *vv.* 3, 4, &c.

above the heavens] Or, perhaps, *upon the heavens.* "Thou hast set Thy glory, that is, hast stamped the image of Thine infinite majesty, upon the heavens, and yet dost condescend to reveal Thyself to man by near and, to some, less significant tokens." This interpretation suits the import of the psalm, and of *v.* 3, 4, which follows. One word (see Note at end) of the Hebrew text is obscure, and no explanation of it, or derivation, entirely satisfactory.

2. *babes and sucklings*] The two words so rendered are distinguished in 1 S. xv. 3 and xxii. 19. The first means (Jer. vi. 11, ix. 21,) a young child above the age of infancy that plays in the streets, and asks for bread (Lam. iv. 4); the second (see 2 Macc. vii. 27) a young infant, not yet weaned, that lisps and mutters scarcely articulate sounds.

ordained strength] Or, "founded strength" (as in the margin), *i.e.* the opinion of strength or glory. Glory is imaged as a palace or tower, which God has founded, Jer. xvi. 19; and the lips of young children and infants lay its first stone. Children and infants that cry to God with scarcely articulate mutterings, and obtain from Him directly, through the arrangements of His providence, or else through the hands of parents, needful support, declare His glory as conspicuously as the starry pole. According to this interpretation the voice or cry of young infants and children, by its singularity and marvellousness (for voice is a miracle of God's providence), proclaims the infinite glory of God. But perhaps the voice or cry of young children and infants is not intended to be specially noted as indicating God's providence; but generally the psalm describes their helplessness and want of all things which God relieves, *miraculously*, through the instrumentality of parents or friends.

because of thine enemies]"To refute Thine enemies (Ps. xiv. 1), who deny Thy power, or care not to see it, and to satisfy Thy friends."

that thou mightest still, &c.] "That Thou mightest, by the wonderful works of Thy power and goodness, still or silence the lips of the enemy and avenger." The word "avenger" means "an avenger of himself, who waits not for God to avenge," or, "one who thirsts for and breathes revenge;" hence, a "violent, arrogant one."

the enemy and the avenger] See Ps. xliv. 16. A well-known Hebraism for "the vengeful enemy."

3. *When I consider*, &c.] The meaning is "for as often as I consider," &c. The terms employed have the force of the present, with the idea added of "iteration."

the work of thy fingers, &c.] In Ex. viii. 19, *the finger* of God works miracles; in xxxi. 18, *it* writes the Tables of the Law.

4. *What is man*, &c.] "What is frail man that Thou rememberest (Gen. viii. 1) him, or the son of man that Thou visitest (Gen. xxi. 1, l. 24; Ps. lxv. 9) him?" The phrase is varied in Ps. cxliv. 3—9.

5. *a little lower than the angels*] Lit. "a little lower than God," or "the divine nature;" with a plain reference to Gen. i. 26, where man is described as made in the image of God, and to *v.* 28, as exercising dominion on earth and sea as God. The meaning is, that man's nature, as originally framed, was divine, or a little lower than divine. A somewhat different import is conveyed by the rendering of the LXX., from which, and from Jewish expositors, the Authorized Version comes. The word Elohim, besides the divine name or the divine essence, is used in Ps. xcvii. 7, and perhaps Ps. lxxxii. 1, 6, for "powers deified by the heathen," and in 1 S. xxviii. 13,

thou hast put all *things* under his feet:

7 †All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;

8 The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, *and whatsoever* passeth through the paths of the seas.

9 O LORD our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth!

1 Cor. 15. c 27.

Heb. *Flocks and oxen all of them.*

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for "the mighty spirits of the unseen world," but does not appear anywhere to mean distinctly "angels."

7. *All sheep and oxen*, &c.] As in the margin, "Flocks and oxen all of them," &c. Flocks, of sheep and the smaller animals, oxen and wild beasts of the field, all bow to man's dominion. The reference is still to man's original estate. But in his fallen estate he rules, by art and violence, the creation, of which, originally, he was constituted the rightful lord.

8. *The fowl of the air*, &c.] Heb. "Fowl of the air and fishes of the sea, travelling (singular) through the paths of the seas." The singular "travelling" cannot refer to fishes (plural), mentioned just before. The phrase, "paths of the seas," suggests the idea of a mariner traversing them: the surface of ocean being often, in the classics ('Il.' I. 312) at least, described as the paths of the sea, but the interior of the great deep never so described. The mention of man is wholly out of place, and the meaning is probably that which the Authorized Version conveys: "Fowl of the air and fishes of the sea, and every creature everywhere traversing the secret paths of ocean, is subject to man." The language of the last verses, 7, 8, of the psalm is poetical; and the ellipsis implied seems expressive in such a strain.

9. *O LORD our Lord*, &c.] A repetition of the exclamation with which the psalm commenced, after an enumeration of God's miracles in heaven, earth, and sea, and *His mercies to man*. So we learn that the last topic is the purport of the psalm; which descends from heaven to earth, the more plainly to evidence His glory, manifested in the earth by gifts to man. *Vv.* 6, 7 are quoted in the Epistle to the Hebrews ii. 6, 7, 8, from the LXX.; and are applied, *v.* 6, to Christ's humiliation, and, *v.* 7, to His exaltation to glory. But the author of the Epistle, says Calvin, does not expound the psalm, but apply it; does not explain its purport, but applies in a natural way some expressions in it. The general purpose of it is to describe the dignity of man as a little lower than the angels, and yet crowned with glory: so Christ was made a little lower than the angels and crowned with unparalleled glory. The writer illustrates the psalm from the life of man's ideal and representative rather than explains it as it came from David.

A similar remark applies to the quotation of *v.* 6 in 1 Cor. xv. 27. The words of the psalm are quoted not as if, in their place, they referred directly to Christ's eventual reign, but as admitting a natural, unforced, application to it, and as properly to be used in illustration of it. Christ, the Ideal of man's nature and true Representative, is really described (but not of necessity originally intended to be described by David) in His future infinite sovereignty over the spiritual world, by the words, which, on the face of them, describe man, or rather, the first man, placed by God at the front of creation. The psalm affords the first example of a psalm written originally, it may be, without any direct reference to Christ and His day, but admitting such an easy and natural application to them, and illustrating the circumstances of them even to the unknown future so pointedly, that it is scarcely possible to suppose that the divine Spirit, Who spake by the lips of David (2 S. xxiii. 2), did not intend such application, and adapt the portraiture of man to its future divine realization.

In Matt. xxi. 16 the words of *v.* 2 are quoted by our Lord Himself not as indicating the Messianic character of the psalm, but for the purpose of noticing their truth in a conspicuous example. Children, by their Hosannas to the Son of David, shamed the Scribes and Pharisees who witnessed His miracles unmoved; as the enemies of God in David's time saw unmoved His wonders, in heaven, earth, and the wide sea.

NOTE on PSALM VIII. 1.

By the Editor.

תנה, the general sense is tolerably clear, but the construction is hopelessly embarrassed. If the reading be correct the verb is in the imperative. Dr Kay accepts this, and renders the passage, "Who mightest have set Thy glory upon the heavens." But no instance can be found of the combination of the relative pronoun with the imperative, nor does it seem to be grammatically possible. Most commentators suspect a flaw, which they supply variously, none however accepting another's conjecture. Hupfeld would read נתתה, "Thou hast set," which removes all the difficulty, and is confirmed by the rendering of the Targ. and

Syriac; but it is improbable that so common and easy a word would be displaced by the obscure תנה. Delitzsch suggests תָּנָה, *i.e.* "extends," which, as a rare word, might be easily misunderstood and written with other vowels by transcribers. Some old versions had probably a passive or neuter verb, whether the niph. of נתן, or, probably, some less common verb; LXX. ἐπῄρθη, Vulg. "elevata est." Thus too the Æth. and Arab. It is clear that the LXX. had a finite verb, with כבוד as subject, in their MS. The word which most nearly corresponds to ἐπῄρθη is נבה; see LXX., Jer. xiii. 5. It is specially applicable to the height of heaven, as God's abode; cf. Job xi. 8, xxii. 12; Ps. ciii. 11; Isai. v. 16, lii. 13, lv. 9. The letters, which are unlike in the late form, do not differ widely in the ancient alphabet, *i.e.* נבה = נבה, תנה = תנה; see Vogüé, 'Mél. arch.' pp. 11, 135, and M. F. Lenormant, 'Essai sur la propagation de l'alphabet phénicien,' Pl. 1, 1872, where the resemblance is even more striking. This was probably the reading before them; whether the true one may be questioned, but it completely satisfies the conditions of sense and construction. In such cases, however, it may be best to admit the probability of an error, and the improbability of a correction which will command general assent.

PSALM IX.

1 *David praiseth God for executing of judgment.* 11 *He inciteth others to praise him.* 13 *He prayeth that he may have cause to praise him.*

To the chief Musician upon Muth-labben, A Psalm of David.

I WILL praise *thee*, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.

2 I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.

3 When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence.

4 For †thou hast maintained my right and my cause; thou satest in the throne judging †right.

5 Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou

† Heb. *thou hast made my judgment.*

† Heb. *in righteousness.*

PSALM IX.

This is a psalm of thanksgiving after the defeat of foreign enemies; see *vv.* 5, 15, and 17; at a time, however, when the writer was still beset by adversaries. The date is uncertain, but it was probably composed on David's return from an expedition against the Syrians or Philistines. Both this and the following psalm (see introd. to Ps. x.) are arranged, though loosely and incompletely, in alphabetic order, either to facilitate their recitation in the temple-service, or, more probably, to aid the memory; this being, like most other alphabetical psalms, of a didactic character; see Pss. xxv. xxxiv. cxi. cxix. cxlv., three of which are ascribed in the titles to David. Psalms thus arranged are referred by some critics to a later period; but it is admitted that no dependence can be placed upon this criterion (see Köster, p. xxiii.), and that both of these psalms are archaic in style, and have marked characteristics of Davidic composition. There appears also to be a close connection between this and the two preceding psalms; compare the first verse with the close of the seventh and the whole tone of the eighth; thus Bp. Wordsworth.

The structure is regular, ten equal strophes of four verses each, the close of two being marked by Higgaion and Selah.

Muth-labben] An obscure term, probably the name of some well-known melody. The meaning may be, "die for the son;" but there are no grounds for probable conjecture.

1, 2. These two verses, remarkable for variety and force of expression, consist of four clauses, each in Hebrew beginning with the letter A, Aleph.

1. *shew forth*] Or, **recount**; the same word which in xix. 1 is rendered "declare." It is frequently combined with "marvellous works," an expression which refers specially to acts by which God saves and protects His people. Ex. iii. 20, xxxiv. 10; Josh. iii. 5. Kay.

3. This verse states the cause of thanksgiving, but the connection of thought is somewhat obscured in our version. It should run thus, **Because my enemies are turned back**, *because* **they stumble and perish before Thy countenance.** David attributes his victory wholly to the manifestation of God's righteous anger. The victory may have been the result of a sudden panic. God looking down from the throne, on which He sat as judge of the conflict (cf. Ps. vii. 7), threw them into confusion. See Ex. xiv. 24.

4. *thou hast maintained*] Lit. as in marg. made, *i. e.* executed my judgment. The reason of that manifestation is stated. It was to vindicate the just cause.

5. There appears to be a reference to Deut. xxv. 19. A war of extermination, provoked by great crimes of the heathen, would seem to be described, such as David waged against the Ammonites; see 2 S. xii. 31. Compare also Deut. ix. 14.

hast put out their name for ever and ever.

6 ‖O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end: and thou hast destroyed cities; their memorial is perished with them.

7 But the LORD shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment.

8 And [a]he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.

9 [b]The LORD also will be †a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.

10 And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.

11 Sing praises to the LORD, which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people his doings.

12 [c]When he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them: he forgetteth not the cry of the ‖humble.

13 Have mercy upon me, O LORD; consider my trouble *which I suffer* of

Or, *The destructions of the enemy are come to a perpetual end: and their cities hast thou destroyed, &c.*

Ps. 96. 13. & 98. 9.

Ps. 37. 39. & 46. 1. & 91. 2.

Heb. *an high place.*

[c] Gen. 9. 5.

‖ Or, *afflicted.*

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6. *O thou enemy*] The construction is difficult, see Note at end of psalm, but the most probable rendering seems to be, **The enemy are extinct, in ruins for ever, and the cities Thou hast destroyed, their very memory has perished.** Cf. Ex. xv. 4—6; Deut. xxxii. 26; Isai. xiv. 20; Job xviii. 17.

7. *shall endure*] Rather, **is seated**, *i.e.* on the throne of judgment. The serene majesty of the eternal Judge is contrasted with the struggles and overthrow of evil men. Cf. Pss. xxix. 10, cii. 12, 26.

prepared] Or, "established."

8. *the world*] The special putting forth of power is thus made a pledge of the universal reign of justice, all things pointing to one end, the perfect manifestation of righteousness by a personal manifestation of God: an anticipation, of which the realization, whether it was present or not to David's mind, began with the first, and will be completed by the second, coming of our Lord.

9. *The LORD also will*, &c.] This rendering is probably correct, though some prefer "and may the LORD be," or "so that the LORD may be." The result of righteous judgment will be security for the injured.

a refuge] Properly, as in the margin, a high place, a fort on the summit of an inaccessible rock (like Bitsche in the late war), such as often afforded a refuge to David in early days of exile. Cf. 2 S. xxii. 3; Ps. xci. 2.

oppressed] Or, **the afflicted**, lit. crushed. The Hebrew word occurs rarely. Ps. x. 18, lxxiv. 21.

10. *know thy name*] *i.e.* know and realize what Thy name involves, viz. the attributes of God manifested by acts of righteousness and love. Ps. xci. 14.

11. *in Zion*] This proves that the psalm was composed after the transfer of the ark to Jerusalem. If, therefore, the date assigned to the preceding psalm be correct, this does not belong to the same group.

people] **Peoples**; an important change, since it shews David's sense of the extent of his mission, a foreshadowing of the work fulfilled in Christ. The verse is important as marking a stage in the development of religious thought. David has two fixed principles—one that the Presence of the Lord is specially manifested in Zion as Head of the Theocracy, the other that His mighty acts are to be declared to all nations. See note on xviii. 49; and Introd. § 8.

12. *When he maketh inquisition for blood*] Rather, **For when He requireth blood**, He remembereth them. "Requireth" expresses the Hebrew, which includes the ideas searching into and exacting retribution. The same word is used in Gen. ix. 5, "Your blood of your lives will I require." Cf. Ps. x. 13. Blood, in the Hebrew "bloods," has the special sense of "bloodshed" (see note on Ps. v. 6), and includes all crimes against life. God is the *goel* (*i.e.* avenger of blood) of all humanity. The word "them" is understood by most to refer to the oppressed in the following clause (Hupf.), or to the seekers in *v.* 10 (Kay). It is more natural to refer it to the "peoples" in the preceding clause, with which this is intimately connected.

13. *Have mercy upon me*] The change of tone is remarkable: the more usual course of the Psalmist's thought is from complaint to prayer, followed immediately by the sense of deliverance; but there is a profound meaning in this, for while the thought of God's searching judgments gives confidence to the afflicted, it brings hidden sins to remembrance: and though David probably wrote this psalm before his conscience was burdened with deadly crime (to which there is no reference in this or the following psalm), his early life had been passed in scenes of violence; he felt the need of mercy, and he was surrounded by domestic enemies. Nothing can be more true or tender than this revulsion of feeling, which is at once followed by the remembrance of the

them that hate me, thou that liftest me up from the gates of death:

14 That I may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation.

d Ps. 7. 16. 15 d The heathen are sunk down in the pit *that* they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken.

16 The LORD is known *by* the judgment *which* he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgaion. Selah.

17 The wicked shall be turned into hell, *and* all the nations that forget God.

18 For the needy shall not alway be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall *not* perish for ever.

19 Arise, O LORD; let not man prevail: let the heathen be judged in thy sight.

20 Put them in fear, O LORD: *that* the nations may know themselves *to be but* men. Selah.

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goodness which was ever "lifting him up from the gates of death." It is needless, and somewhat harsh, to assume that David in this verse is simply recalling the prayer, which he had offered before the expedition, of which he is now celebrating the success.

14. *in the gates*] As generally in the east, the city-gates were the places of public assembly. It differs from the *ἀγορὰ* of the Greeks and the forum of the Romans, being the place where the elders and the king had their seat, where the prophets taught, and all great public announcements of weal or woe were made, where public mourning and public thanksgivings were proclaimed. See *e.g.* 1 S. iv. 18, ix. 18; 2 S. xviii. 4; Jer. xvii. 19 ff., xxxviii. 7; Job xxix. 7 ff.

daughter of Zion] The personification of a people as a female, whether mother, virgin, or daughter, is common in the Hebrew and in other languages. Here it means the people of Jerusalem, regarded in their filial relationship to the "eternal congregation" (Hupf.), of which Zion is the representative or abode.

I will rejoice] Or, "That I may rejoice." Cf. xiii. 5.

15, 16. David reverts to judgment already executed. From the expressions here used it may, perhaps, be inferred that the stratagems of his foes had been the immediate occasion of their overthrow.

16. The verse should be rendered, "Jehovah **hath made Himself known** (thus Dr Kay, who refers to Ezek. xx. 9, where the A. V. has "made myself known," Ewald and Moll), **He hath executed judgment, snaring the wicked** in his own handiwork."

Higgaion] Probably an interlude, giving musical expression to the feelings suggested by God's judgment, followed by Selah, or a sweep of harp-strings.

17. *turned*] Lit., **returned**, or **turned back into Sheol**. The state so designated is that of the departed; it neither declares nor excludes the doctrine of retribution immediately following the separation of soul and body. The expression **turned back**, not merely "turned," is variously understood; it implies a fitness in the punishment, which, although it may not necessarily involve, yet certainly suggests, the foreboding of a terrible and irreversible doom. Compare Acts i. 25.

19. *prevail*] Lit. "be strong." There is an antithesis between the word "man" (in Hebrew, *enosh*, viii. 4), which means weak, and his act, which implies strength: hence the point in the prayer of the following verse, let the peoples know that they are "man," or "weak," and therefore that their violence is irrational as it is futile.

in thy sight] Or, "before Thy face" (see *v.* 3), in Thy presence, as Judge of the Earth.

20. *Put them in fear*] Or, "Set terror over them," *i.e.* let terror be arrayed against them, encountering and overthrowing them. This is generally accepted as the most probable meaning; it is given by Aquila and Theodotion; but the Hebrew word requires the change of a letter (א for ה, which is found in some MSS.; see De Rossi); as it stands in the text. rec. it means "a teacher," and is rendered "a lawgiver" by the LXX., Vulg., Syr., Arab., and Æth. (Symm. a "law"); the rendering of the clause would thus be "give them a teacher," or "a lesson" (see Judg. viii. 16); a sense which appears well suited to the context, and in accordance with David's principles; see his prayer for Solomon in Ps. lxxii. 8—11.

NOTE on PSALM IX. 6.

The rendering in the foot-note follows Hupfeld. He takes האויב as a collective noun, followed by a plural verb. Thus in Jer. iii. 17, iv. 1, v. 8, and in many similar passages, even where the verb follows instead of preceding the subject. תמו, in the sense "brought to an end," is thus combined with "enemy," not with "ruins," as in most of the ancient versions. הָמָּה is the not improbable conjecture of a friend.

PSALM X.

1 *David complaineth to God of the outrage of the wicked.* 12 *He prayeth for remedy.* 16 *He professeth his confidence.*

WHY standest thou afar off, O LORD? *why* hidest thou *thyself* in times of trouble?

2 †The wicked in *his* pride doth persecute the poor: [a]let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined.

3 For the wicked boasteth of his †heart's desire, and ‖blesseth the covetous, *whom* the LORD abhorreth.

4 The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek *after God:* ‖God *is* not in all his [b]thoughts.

† Heb. *In the pride of the wicked he doth persecute.*
[a] Ps. 7. 16. & 9. 16. Prov. 5. 22.
† Heb. *soul's.*
‖ Or, *the covetous blesseth* himself, *he abhorreth the* LORD.
‖ Or, *all his thoughts* are, There is *no God.*
[b] Ps. 14. 1. & 53. 1.

PSALM X.

This psalm is closely connected with the preceding. The alphabetic arrangement in the Hebrew, though incomplete, appears to be continued, and there are marked coincidences of style and language, which in some instances are peculiar to these two psalms. These facts, together with the omission of any superscription (which in the first book of psalms occurs elsewhere only in the 1st and 33rd psalms), have satisfied most critics that this forms the second part of one composition; thus in the LXX. it is combined with the 9th, an arrangement which affects the numbering of all the following psalms. There is, indeed, a very striking difference between the tone of thought and feeling, the preceding psalm being generally triumphant and exulting, this, on the contrary, menacing and mournful; but this may be accounted for, if we suppose, as seems probable (see note on *v.* 1), that, after celebrating the defeat of foreign enemies, the Psalmist turns his mind to the internal state of Israel. Throughout the reign of David and under most of his successors, Palestine was infested by brigands, and disturbed by a factious nobility. The traits of character most prominent in the psalm are described vividly in the first chapters of the book of Proverbs, and in psalms which belong to the age of David. The structure of the psalm is the same as that of the ninth.

1. *afar off*] The preceding psalm ends with an appeal to Jehovah, as the righteous Judge, against foreign enemies; the Psalmist now turns his thoughts to his own country, in which he sees a prevalence of crimes, which indicates a suspension of judgment, and calls for divine interposition.

hidest thou thyself] Or, "hidest Thou," sc. either "eyes," so as not to see, Lev. xx. 4; or "ears," not to hear, Lam. iii. 56.

in times of trouble] Referring to ix. 9, where the same phrase, a very peculiar one in Hebrew (best explained by Hupfeld), is used.

2. The first clause may be rendered "In the arrogance of the wicked the poor is on fire." Thus the LXX., Copt., Vulg., Aquila, Sym., and most of the later commentators. Hitzig agrees with the marginal rendering. The rendering of the second clause has the authority of some ancient versions (generally Rabbinical, Targ., Kimchi, with Aq. and Sym.), but the true rendering seems rather to be, **They**, *the poor*, **are ensnared in the devices, which they**, *the wicked*, **have imagined.**

3. *the wicked boasteth*] Or, **exults**, lit. "sings," as it were, a hymn of praise in honour of his own greed.

and blesseth the covetous] This rendering (which follows the Targ., Aben Ezra, and Kimchi) is approved by some of the ablest critics (Hupf., Perowne, Moll); it gives a forcible and scriptural sense. The wicked not only commits the crime himself, but pronounces others happy in proportion to their successful villainy; in St Paul's words, "not only do the same, but have pleasure (*συνευδοκοῦσιν*) in them that do them," Rom. i. 32; a passage in which the feeling is directly connected, as in this, with contempt of God's judgments. Cf. Ps. xlix. 18.

whom the LORD *abhorreth*] Rather, as nearly all critics agree, **he despiseth Jehovah.** The antithesis is complete, "blesseth" and "despiseth" having for objects severally the covetous man and Jehovah, thus confirming the exposition here given of both clauses. Other critics, as Ew., Ges., take "the covetous" man as the subject, and the verb (*bairek*) in the sense "renounce;" see note on Job i. 5; the covetous man renounces, he contemns Jehovah. The sense in itself is good, but less suited to the context. Dr Kay takes the verb in the sense "gives thanks," sc. to himself. For this he has the authority of Jerome, "avarus applaudens sibi," and Aq., *πλεονέκτης εὐλογήσας*; thus too our marg.: but the verb is transitive, and is followed by an object in all other passages where it occurs.

4. This verse draws out the full meaning of the preceding clause. It should be rendered, **The wicked in the height of his scorn.** "As for the wicked in the height of his scorn, 'God will not require'—'there is no God!'—(such are) all his thoughts." The word "wicked" is thrice repeated with special emphasis. The Hebrew word rendered "through the pride of his countenance" means literally in the height, lifting up, of his nostrils, corresponding to the Latin "naso

5 His ways are always grievous; thy judgments *are* far above out of his sight: *as for* all his enemies, he puffeth at them.

6 He hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved: for *I shall* †never *be* in adversity.

7 [c] His mouth is full of cursing and †deceit and fraud: under his tongue *is* mischief and ‖vanity.

8 He sitteth in the lurking places of the villages: in the secret places doth he murder the innocent: his eyes †are privily set against the poor.

9 He lieth in wait †secretly as a lion in his den: he lieth in wait to catch the poor: he doth catch the poor, when he draweth him into his net.

10 †He croucheth, *and* humbleth himself, that the poor may fall ‖by his strong ones.

11 He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: [d] he hideth his face; he will never see *it*.

12 Arise, O LORD; O God, lift up thine hand: forget not the ‖humble.

13 Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God? he hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not require *it*.

14 Thou hast seen *it;* for thou

†Heb. *unto generation and generation.*
[c] Rom. 3. 14.
†Heb. *deceits.*
‖Or, *iniquity.*
†Heb. *hide themselves.*
†Heb. *in the secret places.*
†Heb. *He breaketh himself.*
‖Or, *into his strong parts.*
[d] Ps. 94. 7.
‖Or, *afflicted.*

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suspendit adunco," or the German Hochnäsigkeit. "He will not require" refers to *v.* 13, where the same Hebrew word is used.

all his thoughts] David does not speak of the words, but of the innermost thoughts, of the wicked; their practical, it may be half-conscious atheism.

5. *grievous*] Rather "firm," stedfast and consistent; the wicked, as such, has no fear of man or God. Thus Hupf. and others. Ges. "durable," as in Job xx. 21. Ew. takes the word in the sense "victorious."

far above out of his sight] The latter words qualify and explain the preceding. God's justice is not suspended, but it is above and beyond the wicked man's sphere of vision.

6. *for I shall never be in adversity*] Or rather, **I shall never be moved, unto generation and generation** (*of my descendants*), **which** *will be* **exempt from calamity.** The wicked looks forward to a future of unbroken prosperity, not only for himself, but for his descendants. This appears to be the true meaning, nor would the description of the bad man's feelings be complete without it; cf. Pss. xvii. 14, xlix. 11, and Job xxi. 8.

7—10. A graphic description of disorders which in the Psalmist's time made life bitter in Palestine. The traits might seem to belong to prowling Bedouin, but probably describe the wild, half-savage nobles, who retained habits formed or developed in the troubled period which preceded the establishment of the kingdom. This passage is therefore to be regarded as one among many indications of an early date.

7. *under his tongue*] A definite image, suggesting a store of venom: cf. Job xx. 12, 13.

8. *villages*] The Hebrew word is specially used of inclosed and fortified villages, in which the agricultural population dwelt together for protection against such assaults. The robber watches them in ambush. Cf. Ps. xvii. 11, 12.

the poor] The Hebrew word occurs only in this psalm here and at *v.* 14: the etymology is doubtful, but the sense is clearly determined by the context.

9. *He lieth*, &c.] Correctly and well rendered by Dr Kay: **he lurks in the covert as a lion in his lair:** not *den* as in A.V.: the lion lies wait, not in his den, but in the thick brushwood of the jungle.

the poor] The word, frequently so rendered, does not here imply poverty, which would have no attraction for the robber, but "gentleness:" it is the normal term for those who do not inflict injury, and are unable to resist it.

catch] The metaphor changes; the man-hunter, more crafty than the lion, catches his prey by drawing him into his net. Cf. Ps. ix. 15.

10. The rendering is questioned (see Note below), but the first clause refers probably to the poor—"And crushed he sinks down, and falls by his strong ones, helpless."

11. The central thought recurs, the key-note of the bad man's refrain; see *v.* 4.

12. *the humble*] The same word which in *v.* 9 (where see note) is rendered "poor."

13. *Wherefore*] *i.e.* Why is it permitted that the wicked should **despise** God? the same word as "abhorreth" in *v.* 3. Thus too in the next clause, "Thou wilt not require" corresponds exactly to ix. 12, "when He maketh inquisition for blood." In the A.V. the change of words obscures the connection of thought.

14. *Thou hast seen it*] With emphatic reference to the bad man's thought, "He will never see," *v.* 11.

beholdest mischief and spite, to requite *it* with thy hand: the poor [f] committeth himself unto thee; thou art the helper of the fatherless.

15 Break thou the arm of the [e] wicked and the evil *man:* seek out his wickedness *till* thou find none.

16 [e] The LORD *is* King for ever and ever: the heathen are perished out of his land.

17 LORD, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt [g] prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear:

18 To judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may no more [g] oppress.

[f] Heb. *leaveth.*

[e] Ps. 29. 10. & 145. 13. & 146. 10. Jer. 10. 10. Lam. 5. 19.

[g] Or, *establish.*

[g] Or, *terrify.*

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spite] Rather, "grief;" the word is used specially of impatience, or fretting under wrongful suffering; see note on Job vi. 2. God sees on the one side the crime, on the other the disturbance of moral feeling, with the intent "to requite it," or more exactly, to take *the whole matter* into His hand, as in the Prayer-book version: so Hupfeld. The meaning "requite" is secondary, and does not express the entire or true sense of the Hebrew.

the poor] The poor man **leaveth** *all* to Thee. See note on *v.* 8, where the same word is used.

the fatherless] As in *v.* 18, the type of all who are desolate; cf. Job vi. 27.

15. *seek out*] A word specially characteristic of the psalm, in the sense "require," and "punish." **Thou shalt search out** *and punish* **his wickedness,** *until* **Thou shalt not find** (cf. xxxvii. 36; Isai. i. 12) *ought to punish*, until all vestige of his existence is annihilated. This appears to be the simplest explanation; it is literal, agrees with the old VV., LXX., Vulg., Targ., Sym., Theod., and is accepted by many critics. Other interpretations, such as that proposed by Hupf., are less satisfactory.

16. The close of the psalm is confident and triumphant. Sure that God sees, the Psalmist is sure that He will punish and exterminate wickedness. This transition of feeling, common in the Davidic psalms, has its preparation in the last clause of the preceding verse; it is indeed a recurrence to the commencing strain of the 9th psalm.

the heathen] A special point of connection between the two psalms, see ix. 19, 20. What the Psalmist there prayed for he regards here as accomplished. Ewald ('Gram.' p. 264) takes the last words as an imprecation, a rare instance of an idiom common in Arabic: but the A.V. has the old VV. and most critics in its favour. The phrase is normal; cf. Deut. iv. 26, viii. 20; Josh. xxiii. 13, 16.

17. *thou wilt prepare*] Or, as in marg., "establish," in the sense of strengthen and comfort: God strengthens the heart, confirming faith by the fulfilment of prayer.

18. *the man of the earth*] The same word (*enosh*), frail mortal man, which is used twice in the last verses of the preceding psalm. David there prays that the heathen may fail, and know that they are mere mortals; here, that being weak, of the earth, earthy, they may be no more terrible. The play of words in the Hebrew is striking, as though in Latin it were rendered "ne terreat homo e terra," or in English loosely "no more on earth let the vile use violence." It is, however, correctly urged by Mr Erle, in an admirable letter on the revision of our translation, that such play upon words does not accord with the genius of our language, and ought not to be adopted in a version intended for popular use.

NOTE on PSALM X. 10.

Each word presents some difficulty. The first clause is referred to the captor by our Auth. Ver., following the old versions, and by some modern commentators. ודכה is in fact *d.* λ., but there is little doubt that דכא=דכה, *i.e.* Aq. *θλασθείς*. In the second clause חלכאים, also *d.* λ., is admitted to mean poor or wretched, but as subject it does not accord with נפל. It may be taken, as in the foot-note, to be an epithet added to complete the picture. בעצומיו, lit. "his strong ones," is variously rendered; "his strong jaws," *seine Krallen*, Ew., or "young lions," Ros., or as A. V. "his men of might;" and this is simplest and most probable. Thus Sym. *μετὰ τῶν ἰσχυρῶν αὐτοῦ*: see Field, 'Hexapla,' in loc. The general meaning is clear; but the whole verse is a remarkable instance of obscure and rugged construction, regarded even by Hitzig as a proof of early date.

PSALM XI.

1 *David encourageth himself in God against his enemies.* 4 *The providence and justice of God.*

To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of David.

IN the LORD put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee *as* a bird to your mountain?

2 For, lo, the wicked bend *their* bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may † privily shoot at the upright in heart.

† Heb. *in darkness.*

3 If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?

4 The LORD *is* in his holy temple, the LORD's throne *is* in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.

a Hab. 2. 20.

5 The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.

6 Upon the wicked he shall rain

PSALM XI.

This psalm resembles the preceding in tone, but refers apparently to different circumstances. We read of menaces and insults offered to David, and of a general overthrow of authority; but the spirit of the Psalmist is tranquil, conscious of uprightness (3, 4), and confident of God's righteousness (7). These facts point clearly (Ew. says "indisputably") to the position of David at Saul's court, when first seriously endangered by calumniators. The style is animated, somewhat obscure in the original, with rapid transitions, characteristic of the earlier Davidic psalms. The structure shews a master-hand. The first line and the last verse are ejaculatory, and express the permanent conviction of the Psalmist. The three verses after the exclamation refer to the counsels of timid friends (1—3): the three following declare the judgment of Jehovah (4—6).

1. *Flee*] Lit. **Flee ye to your mountain, O birds.** The plural verb is best accounted for as a proverbial expression. David's friends, probably in all sincerity like Jonathan, 1 S. xix. 2, urged him to take flight, as children jestingly might cry out to birds, "off to the mountains." In other passages fugitives are compared to birds; thus David himself, 1 S. xxvi. 20, "as one doth hunt a partridge on the mountains." Cf. Ps. cii. 6, 7. Bird is a collective noun, not to be explained by an ellipse, "like a bird" (see however critical note below) or "as a bird," a construction which would leave the plural applied to David's own soul. It is evident that such advice would not have been tendered, either by friends or covert foes, to the king when he became aware of the conspiracy of Absalom; the occasion on which some critics hold that this psalm was composed. Delitzsch.

2. This with the following verse states the grounds for such counsels; in the passage just quoted we read, Saul spake to Jonathan his son, *and to all his servants*, that they should kill David, 1 S. xix. 1.

privily] **in darkness.** Saul intended the murder to be done at night, both for the sake of secrecy and surprise; hence Jonathan's advice, l. c. "hide thyself until the morning." See also *v.* 11 of the same chapter.

3. *the foundations*] sc. of justice and right The Hebrew word occurs only here and Isai. xix. 10, where see marg. It there means "men of rank;" but the figure may apply to all the institutions and principles on which public order and safety rest. Sym. has *οἱ θεσμοί*: Jerome, "quia leges dissipatæ sunt."

what can the righteous do?] Lit. "the righteous, what doeth he?" but probably in the sense of our version: the timid friend might suggest, What will righteousness avail thee, when the very foundation of justice is overthrown? when the king who should administer justice is your foe?

4. The answer of David. The king may reign here, but Jehovah, the only true King, is in the sanctuary of His palace, His throne is in heaven.

temple] Or, "palace:" on the use of the word see note on Ps. v. 7. It is undoubtedly applied to the abode of God in heaven, probably also to the holy tabernacle: here the former application seems preferable.

try] See note on vii. 9. It is interesting to observe how early and how strongly this thought took possession of David's heart.

6. *snares*] This is the literal rendering of the Hebrew, adopted by the LXX., Vulg., Jerome, Syr., and many critics. The metaphor, though somewhat harsh, may be defended, not however as a confusion of images, but as comparing the flashes of lightning, falling suddenly, and surprising the criminal, to fiery cords thrown over the prey. Some commentators follow Symmachus (see Field, 'Hex.'), who takes the word in the sense of coals (*ἄνθρακας*), or brands, but without authority (Hupf.). Cf. *στεροπῆς ἕλικες*, 'Prom. V.' 1083; *Διὸς μάστιξ*, 'Il.' XII. 37: different, but somewhat similar figures.

fire and brimstone] The reference to Gen. xix. 24 is clear, and generally recognized. In the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrha Prophets and Psalmist saw the great example and type of divine judgments; cf. Job xviii. 15.

horrible tempest] The Hebrew word, which is rare and obscure, probably means "a fiery blast." Ew., Hitz. The word occurs elsewhere only in Ps. cxix. 53, where it is rendered "horror," and in Lam. v. 10, where it is connected with famine: "a blast of horror"

‖ Or, *a burning tempest.*

snares, fire and brimstone, and ‖ an horrible tempest: *this shall be* the portion of their cup.

7 For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright.

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may be preferable even to that proposed above. LXX. *πνεῦμα καταιγίδος.*

portion of their cup] This idiom, very common in Scripture, and adopted by our Lord, occurs here probably for the first time. See, however, Job xxi. 20. David speaks of his own cup in a psalm of thanksgiving, xxiii. 5.

7. *his countenance doth behold the upright*] Rather, **the upright will behold His countenance**; thus the Targ. and late commentators, Ew., Hupf., Hitz., Per., Kay. Both English versions follow the LXX. and Vulg. "To behold the face of God" expresses the highest state of blessedness; see Ps. xvii. 15, and, more especially, 1 Joh. iii. 2.

NOTE on PSALM XI. 1.

The LXX. have *ἐπὶ τὰ ὄρη ὡς στρουθίον*: this may suggest a different reading, instead of הרכם "your mountain," הרים כ, *i.e.* mountains, as a bird. Jerome has "in montem."

PSALM XII.

1 *David, destitute of human comfort, craveth help of God.* 3 *He comforteth himself with God's judgments on the wicked, and confidence in God's tried promises.*

To the chief Musician ‖ upon Sheminith, A Psalm of David.

‖ Or, *upon the eighth.*

‖ Or, *Save.*

HELP, LORD; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men.

2 They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: *with* flattering lips *and* with † a double heart do they speak.

† Heb. *an heart and an heart.*

3 The LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, *and* the tongue that speaketh † proud things:

† Heb. *great things.*

4 Who have said, With our tongue will we prevail; our lips † *are* our own: who *is* lord over us?

† Heb. are *with us.*

5 For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set *him* in safety *from him that* ‖ puffeth at him.

‖ Or, *would ensnare him.*

6 The words of the LORD *are* pure words: [a] *as* silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

[a] 2 Sam. 22. 31. Ps. 18. 30. & 119. 140. Prov. 30. 5.

PSALM XII.

This psalm resembles those which precede it in the description of prevalent hypocrisy and ungodliness, and it is probably connected with them, being, as Dr Kay points out, a promise that the four times repeated prayer, "Arise, O Lord" (iii. 7, vii. 6, ix. 19, x. 12), shall be answered.

The psalm is divided, at end of *v.* 4, into two equal parts, each of four verses; the former part has the prayer, the second the answer.

Sheminith] The eighth, or octave, the bass; see Ps. vi.

1. *godly...faithful*] The former word denotes piety, the second, stedfastness in faith.

2. The construction would seem to be, "smoothness of lips with double hearts do they utter." They speak flattering words with treacherous intent.

with a double heart] 1 Chro. xii. 33; Prov. xx. 10. Lit. "with a heart and heart;" compare Homer, 'Il.' IX. 312, 313, "Ος χ' ἕτερον μὲν κεύθει ἐνὶ φρεσὶν, ἄλλο δὲ βάζει.

3. *proud things*] Though less literal than the marg. this expresses better the sense of the Hebrew; see Dan. vii. 8, 20; Rev. xiii. 5.

4. This verse describes the special form of the prevalent guilt, the abuse of the tongue, probably with a special reference to courts of law, the triumph of the ἄδικος λόγος (Aristoph. 'Nubes').

our lips are our own] More correctly, as in marg., **are with us**, we depend on them for success. Isai. xxviii. 15. The next clause refers to x. 4, 5, 12, &c.

5. *puffeth at him*] The Hebrew is obscure, but may probably be rendered, "I will put in safety him against whom man puffeth," or, "I will put him in that safety for which he pants." Cf. Hab. ii. 3, which should be rendered "panteth," *i.e.* hasteneth to its end. Hitz., Kay. Cf. x. 5.

6. *The words*] All words, or utterances of the Lord, and those in particular which the Psalmist heard in his heart and has just recorded. Cf. Ps. xviii. 30, cxix. 140.

in a furnace of earth] Or, "*in* the earth:"

7 Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve † them from this generation for ever.

8 The wicked walk on every side, when † the vilest men are exalted.

† Heb. *him*, that is, *every one of them.*
† Heb. *the vilest of the sons of men are exalted.*

PSALM XIII.

1 *David complaineth of delay in help.* 3 *He prayeth for preventing grace.* 5 *He boasteth of divine mercy.*

To the † chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

† Or, *overseer.*

HOW long wilt thou forget me, O LORD? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?

2 How long shall I take counsel in my soul, *having* sorrow in my heart daily? how long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?

3 Consider *and* hear me, O LORD my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the *sleep of* death;

4 Lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him; *and* those that trouble me rejoice when I am moved.

5 But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation.

6 I will sing unto the LORD, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.

PSALM XIV.

1 *David describeth the corruption of a natural man.* 4 *He convinceth the wicked by the light of their conscience.* 7 *He glorieth in the salvation of God.*

To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of David.

THE [a] fool hath said in his heart, *There is* no God. They are

[a] Ps. 10. 4. & 53. 1.

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the furnace, or crucible, was probably fixed in the earth: see Schiller's 'Song of the Bell,' *v.* 1. Hitzig takes *erets*, "earth," to have the meaning of *rats*, "a bar," as in Ps. lxviii. 30, Heb., and renders, "melted into bars." The reading is ingenious, but unnecessary; and it loses the point. God's word is tried, its purity and efficacy are tested, by contact with the earth, and the earthy nature of man.

7. *them*] The poor and needy, *v.* 5.

this generation] An expression often used, as here, in a bad sense; thus lxxviii. 8; Deut. xxxii. 5, 20; and in the New Testament, *ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη*.

8. *walk*] Or, **wicked men prowl about.**

when the vilest] **when villainy exalts itself among the children of men.** Thus Ewald, and Kay, who compares the description of the profligate son, Deut. xxi. 20, where the same word occurs. Hupfeld, followed by Perowne, renders the word "rabble;" but there are no indications of democratic movements in the time of David.

PSALM XIII.

This was written in a time of severe trial and exhaustion, *v.* 2, not improbably, like the two preceding, when David was pursued by Saul. It is remarkable for the contrast between the Psalmist's trouble and affliction, and the deep inwardness of his faith, hope and gratitude to the Lord, *v.* 6.

1. *How long*] Lit. How long, O Lord, wilt Thou forget me, for ever? The double question in a single clause, of which there are other examples (lxxix. 5, lxxxix. 46), expresses naturally and forcibly the tumult of the Psalmist's thoughts; fully drawn out it would stand, "how long? surely not for ever?"

hide thy face] Cf. Job xiii. 24; Ps. lxxxix. 46.

2. *take counsel*] Or, **settle counsels.** David represents himself as meditating plan after plan. From the following clause, "by day," it may be inferred that he speaks here of night: cf. Ps. iv. 4.

daily] Or, **by day**; the night is passed in harassing thoughts, the day in bitter sorrow.

be exalted over me] This appears to refer to the last verse of the preceding psalm, and probably to an individual, such as Doeg, or Cush. See Ps. vii.

3. *lighten mine eyes*] The eyes bedimmed by weariness or sorrow are lightened by the revival of strength, or hope. Cf. 1 S. xiv. 27, 29; Ezra ix. 8. In this passage David speaks, like Ezra, of the manifestation of God's favour.

lest I sleep the sleep of death] Or, more forcibly, as in the Hebrew, "lest I sleep the death." Cf. Jer. li. 39, "sleep an eternal sleep."

4. *those that trouble me*] **my foes.** The A.V. follows the LXX. and Vulg., but the word means simply, my adversaries, or persecutors.

I am moved] Ps. x. 6.

5. *But I have trusted*] The I is emphatic: **but as for me I have trusted in Thy grace.** The past tense is used to shew that throughout the trial the trust has been unshaken. It is the abiding habit of the Psalmist's soul.

my heart shall rejoice] Or, "let my heart rejoice." David speaks of the result when his trust shall be rewarded by the deliverance, which he knows is at hand.

PSALM XIV.

The psalm, with few but not unimportant variations, occurs twice; see liii. In this, Jeho-

corrupt, they have done abominable works, *there is* none that doeth good.

2 The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, *and* seek God.

[b] Rom. 3. 10.

3 [b]They are all gone aside, they are *all* together become [†] filthy: *there is* none that doeth good, no, not one.

[†] Heb. *stinking.*

4 Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people *as* they eat bread, and call not upon the LORD.

5 There [†] were they in great fear:

[†] Heb. *they feared a fear.*

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vah, but in the 53rd, God, Elohim, is used constantly. Both psalms are attributed to David, nor, with the exception of the last verse (see note), is there any internal indication of a later origin. It describes in general terms a state of profligacy connected with a practical atheism, in that respect not substantially differing from preceding psalms, to which there appear to be some references. Thus Dr Kay observes: "Like xiii., this psalm ends with longing desire for God's salvation." In *v.* 6 we have the upshot of the deliberations alluded to in xiii. 2, and in *v.* 5 we have the "righteous generation," in contrast to xii. 7.

The structure resembles that of David's earliest psalm, xi.; two parts, three verses each, 1—3, 4—6, with an ejaculatory close.

1. *The fool*] The Hebrew is singularly rich in words expressing folly, with the inseparable notion of wickedness. Here the word chosen by David, *nabal*, means imbecile, a vapid, worn-out fool, one whose heart and understanding are degraded, incapable of seeing truth. It is a word never used of mere natural obtuseness, but of spiritual corruption. Hupfeld, whose commentary is specially valuable for discrimination in explaining such epithets, gives several instances, among them Isaiah xxxii. 6, "The vile person (*nabal* as in this passage) will speak villany (*nebalah*), and his heart will work iniquity." See also note on Job ii. 10.

hath said in his heart] In his innermost consciousness, the seat of thought and conviction. A conclusion thus formed is no mere result of confusion or perplexity of the discursive faculty, but a settled conviction. Whether the *fool* speaks it out or not, he is an atheist, "God is not, such is all his thought:" see x. 4: to which there is here a reference, the thought being now more distinctly brought out.

corrupt] The same word as in Gen. vi. 11, 12: "all flesh had corrupted his way;" here "they have corrupted, have made abominable, their action." We have in this verse the outward proofs of the inward godlessness of the fool.

none that doeth good] This phrase in the Hebrew corresponds exactly to the clause "there is no God." That expresses the conviction of the fool, this declares the truth as regards himself and his class. Hupfeld considers this as an argument against the reference to Gen. vi., since one family was then good; but the Psalmist speaks of unbelievers as such.

2. *The LORD*, &c.] The fool looks into his heart and finds there no God; Jehovah looks upon the sons of Adam (the natural man), and finds none who have understanding and seek God; cf. Ps. x. 4. It is evident that David speaks only of the practical atheist; in *v.* 5 he says expressly, "God is in the generation of the righteous:" but the expressions denote a general, all but universal, corruption; such, however, as is implied in passages admitted to refer to David's earlier life; cf. Ps. xi. 4, where the same thought occurs.

3. *all gone aside*] This explains and limits the meaning; the word (*sar*) is used properly of apostates, those who have known God and forsaken Him.

filthy] Lit. rancid: used properly of milk or wine, here of the corruption of a nature originally good. Cf. Job xv. 16.

St Paul turns this psalm with terrible force against his unbelieving countrymen, Rom. iii. Some editions of the LXX. insert the other verses which St Paul adds, 10—13, collected from different psalms; but probably in order to make the text agree with the quotation. Thus too our Prayer-book version, derived from the Vulg., which follows the LXX.

4. *my people*] This proves that God's people, "the righteous generation," *v.* 5, are distinguished from the evil-doers. The expression "my people" is peculiarly suitable to a king.

who eat up my people as they eat bread] The figure of eating a people, consuming and destroying as conquerors, is common in Hebrew and other languages; cf. Num. xiv. 9; Prov. xxx. 14; Lam. ii. 16: but the construction of the second clause is doubtful: it may mean, eating my people they eat bread, nourish themselves by preying upon them: cf. δημοβόρος βασιλεύς, Hom. 'Il.' I. 231 (Kay); or, eating my people, they live on, calmly enjoying their easy and luxurious life; thus Hupfeld, who compares Ps. xxii. 26 and 29. This seems more forcible than the common explanation, and may be the meaning of the rendering βρώσει ἄρτου, LXX.

5. *There*] There, that is, where God surprises them, making His presence felt. He is, in fact, among those whom they are devouring, the righteous generation. Like wild beasts

for God *is* in the generation of the righteous.

6 Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, because the LORD *is* his refuge.

† Heb. *Who will give*, &c.

7 †Oh that the salvation of Israel *were come* out of Zion! when the LORD bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, *and* Israel shall be glad.

PSALM XV.

David describeth a citizen of Zion.

A Psalm of David.

LORD, [a] who shall †abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? [a] Ps. 24. 3, &c. † Heb. *sojourn.*

2 [b] He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. [b] Isai. 33. 15.

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startled by a sudden attack they are struck by a panic; for such is the true force of the words rendered "they were in great fear," lit. *they feared a fear;* the Hebrew word is used always of sudden terror; Ps. liii. 5 adds "where no fear was," *i.e.* no outward cause for alarm.

in the generation of the righteous] The expression is emphatic: He dwells in them as Lord, Saviour, and source of life and strength. "He who touches you touches the apple of Mine eye." Thus again, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?"

6. *Ye have shamed*] Rather, **You may shame** (*i.e.* strive to baffle) **the counsel of the humble, for Jehovah is his refuge.** The expression is elliptical: you may strive to overthrow the counsel of the meek, the special object of God's love, but in vain, for he has a sure refuge. The word counsel points to x. 2. This verse would well befit David's position on such occasions as we find fully described 1 S. xxiii. 7—14.

7. This verse presents some difficulty; it implies the special presence of Jehovah in Zion, and therefore a period later than the setting up of the tabernacle; and the other clauses, though capable of another interpretation, are more naturally understood in reference to the Babylonish captivity. It may, without any serious objection, be regarded as a late addition to the psalm, adapting it to the circumstances of Israel in exile: but that the whole was composed at that time is an hypothesis scarcely reconcileable with the description of the people, not heathens, but apostates, in the first part, or with the expression in the second part "out of Zion," when the sanctuary was destroyed.

On the other side, Dr Kay considers that the words "out of Zion" suit the feelings of David in his flight, when he had left the *ark* in Zion. The expression "bring back the captivity" is used generally of deliverance from affliction, as in Job xlii. 10. In the song of Deborah, Judg. v. 12, it is used in the literal sense. The structure of the psalm, see above, is favourable to the supposition of its integrity.

PSALM XV.

This psalm is supposed by many critics, both ancient and modern, to have been composed by David for the great festival when he brought the ark into the tabernacle at Zion; see 2 S. vi. 12—19. There are sufficient grounds for accepting this date as probable, if not certain. The psalm bears a striking resemblance to the 24th, which celebrates the solemn entrance of the ark into the gates of Zion; this may have been recited before the tabernacle when the ark was placed in it. It was specially an occasion on which the moral and spiritual conditions of permanent acceptance should be openly proclaimed. All critics bear witness to the dignity and power of the style, characteristics of David's psalms (thus Hitzig, Ew., Moll; see also the observations on 'Psalms chronologically arranged,' p. 18, ed. 1870). Some critics (*e.g.* Delitzsch and Kay) hold that it was written by David in banishment, and point to the connection of thoughts between this and the preceding psalm, which they assign to that period.

1. *abide*] Or, as in marg., **sojourn**, as a favoured settler (*παροικήσει*, LXX.: quis cliens diversabitur? Venema). There is a fine distinction in the terms, the believer is admitted as a *settler*, and then takes up his permanent abode (A. V. dwell, *κατασκηνώσει*, LXX.) in his Father's dwelling.

tabernacle] The expression refers to the tent which David pitched on Mount Zion to receive the ark; see 2 S. vi. 17.

holy hill] The hill of Zion became holy by the establishment of the ark, the symbol and pledge of the Divine Presence. The epithet was properly applied to it at once by David on this occasion; thus Moses calls Horeb "the mountain of God," Ex. iii. 1, in reference to the first manifestation of Jehovah.

2. *walketh uprightly*] Lit. perfect. There is an evident reference to the condition of Abraham's acceptance, "*Walk* before me, and be thou *perfect*," Gen. xvii. 1. The word is constantly used to denote a consistent and thoroughly conscientious life; see note on Job i. 1. Compare Ps. ci., a psalm which bears a close resemblance to this, and was probably composed at the same date; thus Ewald.

worketh righteousness] Contrasted with "workers of iniquity," Ps. xiv. 4. Jerome

3 *He that* backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor ‖taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.

‖ Or, *receiveth*, or, *endureth*.

4 In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD. *He that* sweareth to *his own* hurt, and changeth not.

c Exod. 22. 25. Lev. 25. 36. Deut. 23. 19. Ezek. 18. 8. & 22. 12.

5 c *He that* putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these *things* shall never be moved.

PSALM XVI.

1 *David, in distrust of merits, and hatred of idolatry, fleeth to God for preservation.* 5 *He sheweth the hope of his calling, of the resurrection, and life everlasting.*

‖ Michtam of David.

‖ Or, *A golden Psalm of David.*

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observes, "Justitia sola magna virtus est, et mater omnium." In the next clause, "speaketh the truth in his heart" recalls "with a double heart do they speak," Ps. xii. 2.

3. *with his tongue*] Lit. on his tongue; a forcible idiom, representing the slanderous lie as a store of venom; see Ps. x. 7: there it is said to be under the tongue, ready for use, here "on the tongue," ready to be discharged. Cf. ci. 5.

doeth evil] Cf. Prov. iii. 29.

his neighbour] A different word from that used in the preceding clause. That denotes intimacy, this mere vicinity.

taketh up] Better than the marg. The calumniator takes up the lie, and circulates it.

4. *In whose eyes*, &c.] The A. V. follows the LXX. and Vulg., and is supported by many commentators (Ew., Moll, Hupf.), but the old Jewish interpretation (Targ.) is generally accepted, and gives a more forcible meaning, "he is despised in his own eyes, and worthless, and fearers of the LORD he honoureth." Thus Hitzig, Delitzsch, Kay (who refers to 2 S. vi. 22), and the Psalter, "he that setteth not by himself, but is lowly in his own eyes." David thus makes the extremest humility (poorness of spirit, Matt. v. 3) a chief characteristic of God's people; see Ps. xxii. 6, where this expression is applied to Him who was "despised and rejected of men," Isai. liii. 3.

to his own hurt] If a man made an unguarded oath he was bound to keep it if it injured himself only, but if it involved doing evil to others, the Law provided a trespass-offering; see Lev. v. 4, 5, 6. In the former case he was not allowed to *alter* it; see Lev. xxvii. 10, where the same word is used. Thus Hitz., Moll, Kay. Instead of "to his own hurt" the LXX. has "to his neighbour," τῷ πλήσιον αὐτοῦ: see also Vulg. and Sym. ap. Field. Our Psalter, as Perowne observes, combines the two renderings.

changeth not] Or, "alters it not;" see last note.

5. *usury*] The prohibition (see marg. reff.) is admitted to apply to dealings between Israelites, but the principle undoubtedly includes all abuse of usury, to which the ruin of agriculture in Italy was attributed by Roman poets, orators, and statesmen.

taketh reward] See Ex. xxiii. 8; Deut. xvi. 19; and compare the charge of Jehoshaphat to his judges, 2 Chro. xix. 6, 7. This warning, ever needed and constantly repeated, fitly closes the king's enumeration of the conditions of citizenship in the true Israel.

be moved] See x. 6, xiii. 4 (to which there may be a reference), and xvi. 8.

PSALM XVI.

This psalm is remarkable for its evangelical spirit; in none is the faith stronger, the hope, indeed the certainty, of immortal life, more fully developed. It is ascribed to David by St Peter and St Paul on two solemn occasions; see Acts ii. 25, xiii. 35; but the date is questioned, and some critics (as Ewald, who fully recognizes its exceeding beauty) hold it to belong to the period of captivity. It is, however, full of the spirit of David; it is connected with the psalms which precede and follow it by several thoughts and expressions; and the style is recognized by critics, usually captious in the question of Davidic authorship, as "belonging unquestionably to high antiquity" (Hitzig), and bearing clear traces of transactions in David's reign. The freshness and vivid colouring, the warmth and brilliancy of imagery, may point to the early portion of David's reign ere yet the dark cloud had fallen on his spirit; not improbably soon after his peaceful settlement, "when the king sat in his house, and the LORD had given him rest round about from all his enemies," 2 S. vii. 1.

Hitzig assigns the psalm to a still earlier period, and finds in *vv.* 2, 3 a reference to the spoils which David sent from Ziklag to his friends among the elders of Judah, 1 S. xxx. 26. He also points out the temptations to "hasten after another god," to which David says expressly that he was exposed in exile, 1 S. xxvi. 19. This consideration has much weight; both remarks shew the impression of one of the acutest of German critics as to the Davidic character of this great psalm. That it is typical and Messianic will not be questioned by those who recognize the authority of the New Testament.

PRESERVE me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust.

2 *O my soul*, thou hast said unto the LORD, Thou *art* my Lord: [a]my goodness *extendeth* not to thee;

[a] Job 22. 2. & 35. 7. Ps. 50. 9.

3 *But* to the saints that *are* in the earth, and *to* the excellent, in whom *is* all my delight.

4 Their sorrows shall be multiplied *that* [‖]hasten *after* another *god:* their drink offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips.

‖ Or, *give gifts to another.*

5 [b]The LORD *is* the portion [†]of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.

[b] Deut. 32. 9. Lam. 3. 24. † Heb. *of my part.*

6 The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant *places;* yea, I have a goodly heritage.

7 I will bless the LORD, who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons.

The structure is nearly regular, three parts, the first and second each with four verses, the third with three only.

Michtam] The interpretation in the marg., "a golden psalm," rests on Rabbinical authority; it is adopted by the Fathers generally, and seems not unsuitable to the five psalms, lvi.—lx., where it occurs; it is especially adapted to this psalm, so remarkable for richness in spiritual thoughts and imagery. A meaning nearly allied to this, viz. jewel or treasure, is accepted by other modern critics; thus Hitzig, after Grotius and Simonis.

2. *O my soul*] Instead of supplying these words modern commentators follow the ancient versions, which have, "I said to Jehovah, Thou art my Lord," Heb. Adonai. Cf. Isai. xxxviii. 10, 11.

my goodness extendeth not to thee] There is no doubt that this rendering is incorrect; the Hebrew may mean, "My well-being is not above Thee," or "beyond Thee;" *i.e.* is as nought compared with Thee; or "is not apart from Thee," sc. "depends wholly upon Thee." Thus Dante, "come dicesse a Dio: d'altro non calme," 'Purg.' VIII. 12. On the construction and the connection with the following verse see Note at end of psalm.

3. *But to the saints*] The connection is much disputed; it would seem to be this: My well-being, which is wholly from Thee, is for (*i.e.* is granted for the benefit of) saints, those who are in the land (sc. all true Israelites), and for the noble (sc. noble in spirit), in whom is all my delight. The word "saints," as in the New Testament, includes all the people of the covenant: see Lev. xix. 2, and elsewhere in the Pentateuch.

4. *Their sorrows shall be multiplied*] This rendering is probably correct; it follows LXX., Syr. and Vulg., and is preferred generally by late critics. The word "sorrows" may, however, refer to idols, thus Targ., Jerome, Symm.

that hasten after another god] Or, "who woo another god." The Hebrew word rendered "hasten" occurs in the same form only in Ex. xxii. 16, where the A.V. has "endow her to be his wife," *i.e.* pay a dowry for her. Modern commentators generally prefer this rendering: but the sense "hasten" is found in all the old versions, and is defended by Ges. 'Thes.' p. 772, who observes, that the word never occurs with the sense of wooing in reference to idolatrous offerings. The relation of the worshipper to his idol is generally represented as that of an adulteress, not of a suitor; see, however, Hos. viii. 9; Ezek. xvi. 33, 34.

of blood] This is generally understood to mean hateful, as though mingled with blood, or, "as though offered by murderers;" cf. Isai. lxvi. 3. Bloody libations are not recorded to have been offered by heathens; but the term may possibly be applied to wine mingled with blood, of which there is frequent mention. It may, however, be noticed that on Egyptian monuments the priest is represented as piercing the head of a kneeling figure, whose blood spurts out as a libation.

their names] sc. of the false gods; cf. Ex. xxiii. 13.

5. David exhausts the copious list of Hebrew synonyms to describe the completeness of the happiness which he has in the Lord, thus drawing out the meaning involved in *v.* 2. Each tribe, each family had its own inheritance; but to Aaron and his seed the Lord had said, "I am thy part, and thine inheritance among the children of Israel," Num. xviii. 20, where see reff. David claims that inheritance for himself as head of the Theocracy, and type of Him who is anointed Priest, and King, and Lord of all.

6. *The lines*] The lines which marked the boundaries of a property; cf. Josh. xvii. 5, where A.V. has "portions." The words naturally imply a new grant, and accord with the view that this psalm was composed when David took up his abode in Jerusalem.

in pleasant places] The A. V. renders the same word "pleasures" in Job xxxvi. 11.

I have a goodly heritage] Or, "my heritage is beautiful to me," goodly in itself, and in my appreciation.

7. *who hath given me counsel*] This may refer to a special intimation of God's will touching his settlement; cf. 1 S. xxiii. 9—12

[c] Acts 2. 25. 8 [c] I have set the LORD always before me: because *he is* at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also [†] shall rest in hope.

[†] Heb. *dwell confidently.*

[d] Acts 2. 31. & 13. 35. 10 [d] For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

11 Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence *is* fulness of joy; at thy right hand *there are* pleasures for evermore.

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and 2 S. v. 19. On such an occasion the king would not fail to seek counsel of the Lord.

my reins] The reins (lit. kidneys) are to the Hebrews the seat of feeling and emotions; see Job xix. 27; and this verse implies that the happy settlement had been preceded by anxious meditations at night, ever associated in David's mind with self-examination, and the searching of man's spirit by God; see Ps. iv. 4, xvii. 3, and compare Job xxxiii. 14—16, 19.

8—10. This passage is quoted by St Peter and St Paul as directly, or in its highest sense, applicable to the Messiah. It contains one of the very clearest and strongest declarations of belief in a blessed futurity which can be adduced from the Old Testament. As such it is recognized by ancient and modern interpreters, none speaking out more clearly than Ewald, p. 249: "It goes beyond other words of David, nor is anything corresponding to it found in later Hebrew writers." There is but one adequate explanation of such a fact, viz. that the Spirit of Christ, which was in David as a prophet (see 1 Pet. i. 11 and Acts ii. 30), moved and controlled his utterances, so that, while they expressed fully his own yearnings, they *signified beforehand the glory that should follow* in the resurrection of Christ. Moll, p. 101, draws out this view with his usual ability and insight.

8. *have set...always*] Both words express most forcibly the continuous realization of the divine Presence.

shall not be moved] Cf. Ps. x. 6.

9. *my glory*] *i.e.* my soul, or spirit; man's spiritual nature, which is his true glory, in which is found the image and likeness to God. The expression first occurs in Gen. xlix. 6, where it is used by Jacob as synonymous with "soul;" see note in loc. We have thus in this passage the threefold division of man's nature: the heart, as the seat of the understanding; the soul, as the abode of spiritual instincts; and the flesh, or body. Each has its own blessing; even the lowest is secure of endurance; for though the words "shall rest in hope" mean primarily "will dwell in security," or "confidence," that confidence involves the thought of permanence or restoration. David speaking *as a prophet* (Acts ii. 30) uses words which point to another life. The last words "shall *rest* in hope" correspond to xv. 1, "shall *dwell* in Thy holy hill," where the same verb is used in the Hebrew.

10. *in hell*] "To Sheol," here, as always, the abode of the departed. God will not leave the soul in that intermediate state into which it passes at death.

thine Holy One] This is a true rendering; the word means one who is the object or bearer of divine grace (Ps. lxxxix. 19, l. 5, where A.V. has "saints"), or even the bestower of grace; in which sense, though rarely, it is applied to God Himself, as in Ps. cxlv. 17; Jer. iii. 12, where A. V. has "merciful." It must be referred to Christ on the authority of St Peter and St Paul (see marg. refs.), who assume this application as a fact universally admitted by those whom they address. The reading of the Hebrew is contested whether "holy ones," or "holy one," but the latter has the support of all ancient versions, of the greater number of MSS., especially of the best and most ancient, of the New Testament, and of able critics.

corruption] This rendering should be retained; it follows the LXX. (διαφθοράν, Vulg. corruptionem, Syr. id.; the Chaldee is doubtful, see Buxtorf, 'Lex. Ch.' p. 2374; but as the text stands the meaning "corruption" is the more probable); thus Dr Kay, Klauss, and Moll, who fully justifies it by reference to other passages (as Job xvii. 14; Ps. xlix. 9, lv. 23, where it is distinguished from the pit, and rendered A.V. "destruction;" better, as here, "corruption"). Some commentators (Ew., Hupf., Perowne) render the word "pit," *i.e.* "grave;" a translation to which there is the very serious objection that it makes God promise that His Holy One shall not be buried, and that it contradicts St Peter and St Paul (Acts ii. 31, xiii. 35—37); thus being in fact equally opposed to common sense and to Holy Writ. The meaning was so clear to the Jewish Rabbins, that, unable as they were to reconcile it with David's history, they invented the fable that his body was preserved from corruption. Moll.

11. *the path of life*] From the context it may be inferred that the Psalmist speaks of the way to eternal life in contrast to corruption and the abode in Sheol. That life is the life in God, of which the holy become partakers when admitted into His Presence, where

Christ seated at His right hand dispenses pleasures (the same word as in *v.* 6, Kay) for evermore.

The psalm is Messianic in the highest sense; and were it not capable of a twofold application, to David and to Christ, the latter alone would satisfy the demands of a sound exegesis. It adheres at once closely to the literal interpretation, and accords with the revealed mind of the Spirit.

NOTES on PSALM XVI. 2, 3.

2. It is agreed that *tobathi* means physical good, prosperity or happiness, or, nearer still, "well-being," as above. The meaning of עליך is contested: lit. upon thee. (1) A meaning grammatically possible is "a debt or duty incumbent upon Thee;" thus Böhl and Isaki (quoted by Moll), and Dr Kay, who render, "my prosperity has no claims upon Thee," *i.e.* is a free gift of Thy bounty. (2) Over and above, beyond; or, exists not save in Thee; has no other source. Thus Symm., οὐκ ἔστιν ἄνευ σου. The Chald., "is not given save by Thee." Syr., "is of Thee." In Arabic the preposition على has the secondary and somewhat rare meaning "præter;" cf. Ewald, 'Gram. Arab.' § 591, عليك, te neglecto, te posthabito; but no clear instances of such usage are found in Hebrew. Böttcher seems to accept this view; he compares for the sense in Ps. lxxiii. 25. (3) "Over Thee" is the most obvious and natural construction, and, if accepted, must be understood to mean, "more esteemed or loved than Thou:" a litotes which affirms the opposite, "I love Thee far above all that belong to my well-being." (4) Hupf. suggests that בל may mean "only," which would give "my happiness is in Thee alone;" but no instance of such a meaning can be adduced. (5) Perowne would read כל for בל. Two MSS., one of Kennicott, one of De Rossi, have כל, but the emendation is scarcely admissible as an evasion of a difficulty. The general sense, My happiness is of Thee only, in some form or other is generally accepted.

3. LXX. τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς ἐν τῇ γῇ αὐτοῦ, ἐθαυμάστωσε πάντα τὰ θελήματα αὐτοῦ ἐν αὐτοῖς. Vulg. "in terra ejus, mirificavit omnes voluntates *meas* in eis." Syr. follows the text rec. omitting המה. The Masoretic text appears to be corrupt; it is not only obscure, but seems to introduce an alien thought. The LXX. may have read, לקדושים אשר בארץ המה יאדיר כל חפצו בם, "For the saints who are in the land, He hath magnified all His delight in them." Taking the Hebrew text as it stands the construction least open to objection is that which connects this verse with the preceding, as in the foot-note.

PSALM XVII.

1 *David, in confidence of his integrity, craveth defence of God against his enemies.* 10 *He sheweth their pride, craft, and eagerness.* 13 *He prayeth against them in confidence of his hope.*

A Prayer of David.

HEAR †the right, O LORD, attend unto my cry, give ear unto my prayer, *that goeth* †not out of feigned lips.

† Heb. *justice.*

† Heb. *without lips of deceit.*

2 Let my sentence come forth

PSALM XVII.

This psalm is attributed to David in the inscription, and is generally admitted to have the marked characteristics of his early style. In some points it resembles the preceding psalm, but it was evidently written under different circumstances: some peculiar expressions are found in both, in both there is the declaration of entire faith in a future life (which may probably account for their juxtaposition in the Psalter); but in this there is a deeper tone of indignation, the current of thought and language is more vehement and abrupt, the writer is sorely tried inwardly (3—5), and outwardly oppressed and persecuted. The feelings, which must have possessed David when Saul "pursued after him in the wilderness of Maon," 1 S. xxiii. 26, could not be expressed more vividly; and Hitzig, whom Moll follows, is probably right in assigning the psalm to that period of David's life.

The psalm is called a prayer (Tephillah); it may be as the ancient and generic name for these compositions, which afterwards bore different designations with reference to their liturgical use, or musical accompaniment; but more probably because David himself calls it a prayer (*v.* 1), and devout supplication is its special characteristic. Four other psalms (lxxxvi., xc., cii., cxlii.) bear the same title: see also the subscription of Ps. lxxii., 20. The structure is regular, with clauses of three lines each; but the divisions are not strongly marked, except at the end of *v.* 12.

1. *the right*] *i.e.* Hear and vindicate the righteous cause. David identifies his cause with that of righteousness, which was assailed in him, and speaks in him.

from thy presence; let thine eyes behold the things that are equal.

3 Thou hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited *me* in the night; thou hast tried me, *and* shalt find nothing; I am purposed *that* my mouth shall not transgress.

4 Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept *me from* the paths of the destroyer.

5 Hold up my goings in thy paths, *that* my footsteps † slip not.

† Heb. *be not moved.*

6 I have called upon thee, for thou wilt hear me, O God: incline thine ear unto me, *and hear* my speech.

7 Shew thy marvellous lovingkindness, O thou ‖ that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust *in thee* from those that rise up *against them.*

‖ Or, *that savest them which trust* in thee *from those that rise up against thy right hand.*

8 Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings,

† Heb. *that waste me.*

9 From the wicked † that oppress

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my cry] This Hebrew word, which generally means a joyful shout, here expresses the loudness and earnestness of the entreaty; "prayer," in the next clause, the devoutness of the feeling to which it gave utterance. Both words are thus combined in Ps. lxi. 1, Jer. vii. 16.

that goeth, &c.] Or, "from lips without guile."

2. *my sentence*] Or, "my judgment;" the word implies a declaration of the righteousness of his cause.

the things that are equal] Or, **uprightness**; sc. the uprightness of the supplicant for justice.

3. This verse expresses the consciousness not of sinlessness, but of sincerity; the Psalmist needs, and invites, the fiery process of testing and refining, but with a certainty that it will result in a recognition of his integrity.

in the night] See note on xvi. 7.

thou hast tried me] Assayed me, as gold or silver by fire. See xii. 6, xxvi. 2; Job xxiii. 10; Zech. xiii. 9; and 1 Pet. i. 7.

and shalt find nothing] Lit., Thou wilt not find, sc. any dross, sc. any guilty remembrance or purpose.

I am purposed] See last note. This rendering (if retained as by Dr Kay, who compares Jer. iv. 28) implies deliberate purpose under strong provocation.

that my mouth shall not transgress] Or, "my mouth transgresseth not." David asserts that the result of the trial will be that he is declared innocent in thought and in word. This rendering seems on the whole preferable, since the object of his prayer is to obtain a recognition of his right, *v.* 1.

4. *Concerning the works of men*] Or, **man**, lit. Adam; the natural man. David continues his defence. His intent is pure, his words innocent, and, as to his course of life, his acts as a natural man, he has been guided by God's word, and kept himself from the ways of the violent. David may possibly refer to a special temptation to do a violent and cruel act, such for instance as when "*some bade* him kill Saul, and his *eye spared* him, being the Lord's anointed" (1 S. xxiv. 10). The construction of these clauses presents some difficulties, but the general meaning appears to be correctly expressed by the A. V.

5. *Hold up*, &c.] Rather, "holding fast to Thy tracks in my goings my footsteps have not been moved." The construction is somewhat difficult, but the general meaning is clear, that David keeping steadily in tracks marked for him by God is preserved from overthrow. David states a fact and accounts for it, thus completing his defence. The word "moved" is characteristic of David's style (see x. 6, xv. 5); it implies a violent shock.

6. *I have called*] The I is emphatic. "I have called, I, such as I feel myself to be." It marks the transition; his "apologia pro vita sua" is completed, he turns to prayer.

7. The marginal rendering of this verse, which agrees with the Prayer-book, is probably correct, but the A. V. gives a good sense, and is defended by able critics. The question whether the preposition before "right hand" should be rendered "by" or "against" is open; both constructions are tenable; the latter has in its favour Ps. xxvii. 12; Mic. vii. 6; LXX., Vulg. Hupfeld, however, says *without doubt* it means "by Thy right hand;" thus too Dr Kay.

8. *apple of the eye*] The Hebrew expression is even more full of tenderness; "the pupil, daughter of the eye." Both figures in this verse are found in most touching passages of the O. T.: the earliest in Deut. xxxii. 10, 11; a book ever present to the mind of the Psalmist. The ancient Egyptians had the term "child of the eye" for darling; see Vol. 1. 'Essay on Egyptian History,' note 20. Compare κοράσιον and "pupilla."

under the shadow, &c.] Cf. Ruth ii. 12; Matt. xxiii. 37.

9. *that oppress me*] Or, "who destroy me," or, "waste me," as the A. V. renders this word, Isai. xv. 1.

me, *from* † my deadly enemies, *who* compass me about.

10 They are inclosed in their own fat: with their mouth they speak proudly.

11 They have now compassed us in our steps: they have set their eyes bowing down to the earth;

12 † Like as a lion *that* is greedy of his prey, and as it were a young lion † lurking in secret places.

13 Arise, O LORD, † disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my soul from the wicked, ‖ *which is* thy sword:

14 ‖ From men *which are* thy hand, O LORD, from men of the world, *which have* their portion in *this* life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid *treasure:* † they are full of children, and leave the rest of their *substance* to their babes.

15 As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.

† Heb. *my enemies against the soul.*

† Heb. *The likeness of him* (that is, *of every one of them*) is *as a lion* that *desireth to ravin.*

† Heb. *sitting.*

† Heb. *prevent his face.*

‖ Or, by *thy sword.*

‖ Or, *From men by thine hand.*

‖ Or, *their children are full.*

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deadly enemies] The Hebrew has "enemies in soul," *i. e.* in fierce intent, lusting for my destruction. The marg. "against my soul," *i. e.* against my life, is defensible (see Kimchi, ap. Hupf.), but less probable.

10. *They are inclosed in their own fat*] Lit. "they have closed their fat," sc. their heart, which from self-indulgence is become a mere feelingless lump of fat. See Ps. cxix. 70. They are no more capable of kindly emotions, or they exclude them altogether. There is truth both physiological and moral in this representation. The heart in "fatty degeneracy" becomes sluggish, and loses its susceptibility. Hupfeld shews that in Arabic the word here rendered "fat" means the pericardium, or simply the heart; and traces the Hebrew word for heart to the same meaning, lêb, heart, properly "a fatty lump." Thus too Schnur., Ros., Ges. On the general connection between the physical and moral symptoms, see Deut. xxxii. 15; Ps. lxxiii. 7; and Job xv. 27.

11. *compassed*] Thus "Saul and his men *compassed* David and his men round about to take them," 1 S. xxiii. 26.

bowing down to the earth] Or, "**to cast** *me* down to the earth." The figure refers to the lion which fixes his eye on the prey, so that it falls paralysed by terror. The Hebrew may be rendered "they set their eyes that *their prey* may fall on the earth."

12. *Like as a lion*, &c.] **His likeness is as a lion eager to rend.** In both clauses the lion is represented, as in the preceding verse, crouching with its eye fixed on the prey, eager to spring and rend it. Cf. Ps. x. 7—9. One person is clearly designated, doubtless Saul, whose image in David's mind was associated with that of a lion, both for evil and for good; see 2 S. i. 23.

13. *disappoint*] Or, "prevent," "come before his face;" the lion has its face towards the prey, in act to spring, the LORD is entreated to stand suddenly in front of it, and arrest its leap. Cf. Ps. xviii. 4, 5. It would be well to retain the word "prevent" here as in all similar passages. Thus the A. V. in Job xxx. 27.

cast him down] Or, "fasten him down;" the Hebrew graphically describes the act of pressing down the crouching beast, keeping him in the base, treacherous position he has assumed. The same word is used xviii. 39, lxxviii. 31.

which is thy sword] Rather, "by Thy sword:" although this scarcely expresses the force of the original; lit. "do Thou, Thy sword, deliver my soul, &c.," Thy sword being thus in apposition with "Thou." The A. V. represents the wicked as instruments in God's hand; a true thought in itself (see Isai. x. 5), but not adapted to the context, in which David's enemies are acting *against* God.

14. *From men*, &c.] As in the marg. From men by Thy hand, O Lord.

of the world] The "world" here means temporal existence, the world of time and sense, corresponding to αἰών in the N. T., "the children of this *world*," Luke xvi. 8. "Of the world" does not express, as our idiom might do, men who live in the world, but who are of it, deriving from it their motives and objects. The meaning comes out even more distinctly in the next clause, *whose whole portion is in this life*, who have here all that is due to them, all that they care to receive; see Luke xvi. 25.

hid treasure] Or, simply "stores," sc. food stored by God's providence for all His creatures, used to satiety by those "who have lived in pleasure upon the earth," Jas. v. 5.

leave the rest, &c.] This is a very important statement, shewing how entirely the Psalmist and Job (xxi. 17) agree as to the course of God's providence; both repudiating the doctrine of retribution in this life, exactly corresponding to man's deserts.

15. The meaning of this verse, the most important in the psalm, is much disputed. Happily there is no doubt as to the literal sense.

The language is quite free from obscurity. I, says David as before (*v.* 6) emphatically, I, such as I am, poor, persecuted but innocent, and God's friend, shall behold Thy countenance in righteousness. So far there is no substantial difference between commentators. David sets against the prosperity of his enemies the single fact that he is sure of a vindication of his righteousness in God's own presence. But the next clause goes much farther. "When I awake," what can that mean? Not from sleep, David had no thought of sleeping; not from the present danger, that had no connection with repose; what could it be but from death? His enemies are satisfied in this life with the hid treasures of Providence; when David awakes out of the sleep, which will be the end of all happiness to them, he will be satisfied with God's likeness. The word likeness does not mean the "likeness and image" of Genesis i., but the Form of God Himself, called in the N. T. *μορφή* and *εἶδος*, of which all we know is that it is inconceivable, but of which we believe that it will be beheld and realized in the Person of the Son. David believed, if we may trust these words, that when life was gone, and the sleep of death terminated, all his longings would be satisfied by the manifestation of that Form.

The process of some German critics in dealing with this text is instructive. Most of them are satisfied that the psalm must belong to the time of David, and since they hold that no indications of a future life are to be found at that period, they attempt to explain away the words: the sense however is too obvious for a man of real insight into language to reject, and therefore, in spite of the conclusion to which nearly all other arguments lead, some able but unscrupulous commentators repudiate the Davidic authorship, and assign this composition to the time when, as they assume, the Jews had learned the doctrine of immortality from their Persian conquerors. Very few points in biblical exegesis are more certain than that David wrote the psalm, and that this text declares, what is elsewhere clearly intimated, a firm belief in a futurity of blessedness reserved for the true children of God.

NOTE on Psalm xvii. 3.

Some critics (Hupf., Ew., Moll,) render the first word in the second clause ("I am purposed," A.V.) "guilty thought in me." This completes the sentence, is grammatically tenable (Hupf. takes it as the infin. with suffix), and has the authority of LXX., *ἀδικία*, Vulg., "iniquitas," Targ., שחיתא, "corruption" (with an alternative, however, "cogitari malum"); Syr. "evil." This is probably the true reading and rendering.

PSALM XVIII.

David praiseth God for his manifold and marvellous blessings.

To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of David, the servant of the Lord, who spake unto the Lord the words of *this song in the day *that* * 2 Sam. the Lord delivered him from the hand of all 22. his enemies, and from the hand of Saul: And he said,

I WILL love thee, O Lord, my strength.

Psalm XVIII.

This psalm is the longest, and in some points one of the most important, of those which are attributed to David in the inscriptions. It was composed after the complete subjugation of David's foreign enemies, when all traces of opposition from Saul's family had passed away, and, as critics generally agree (see Ew., Hitz.), for the express purpose of a public thanksgiving, and celebration of a series of victories. So much we gather from the inscription, which is repeated nearly verbatim in 2 S. xxii., and was probably taken from a contemporary chronicle. On the other hand, it appears to have been written before the great sin was committed which threw a dark shadow over the spirit of the king and the state of his kingdom. There is no allusion to domestic enemies, no indication of remorse for special guilt; all foes are subdued, and the Psalmist, confident in God's salvation, looks forward to a peaceful and glorious future for himself and his seed. These and other notices make it highly probable that it belongs to the period described in 2 S. vii.—ix, special references to which will be pointed out in the notes. The style of the psalm is such as befits the maturity of David's genius; it is at once remarkable for vigour and grace, full of archaic grandeur, and yet free from abrupt transitions and thoughts labouring for utterance, forcing, as it were, language into strange forms, which make some of the earlier psalms difficult to understand. (See some fine general remarks by Ewald, 'G. I.' III. p. 78.) The internal indications of authorship, and the external evidence, are so convincing, that with two exceptions (Lengerke and Olshausen, see Introd.) critics of all schools, none more earnestly than Ewald and Hitzig, accept it as the production of David; the one, indeed, by

2 The LORD *is* my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, † my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, *and* my high tower.

† Heb. *my rock.*

3 I will call upon the LORD, *who is worthy* to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

4 [a] The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of † ungodly men made me afraid.

[a] Ps. 116. 3. † Heb. *Belial.*

5 The ‖ sorrows of hell compassed

‖ Or, *cords.*

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which the authenticity of other psalms may be tested. The whole spirit of the king, as head of the Theocracy, pervades the composition.

The psalm is not directly Messianic, applying as it does unquestionably to the person, acts and feelings of David, but typical bearings throughout are distinct. All events are idealized. The personal manifestation of God, the king's righteousness, his mission to the heathen, as their head, *v.* 43, and teacher, 49, point to God's anointed Son, in Whom the promises to David and his seed have an absolute fulfilment. Two meanings are not to be looked for, but the true and literal meaning, applicable to the type, is even more entirely applicable to the antitype.

The metrical system is peculiar. First five strophes, each of three verses, ending with the division at *v.* 15: then five strophes, each increasing in length; an arrangement probably determined by special circumstances, this being a processional hymn, but serving admirably to express the overflowing thankfulness of the great Psalmist's heart.

the servant of the LORD] This designation is often given to David, both in the psalms, (xix. 11, 13, xxxvi., as here, in the inscription, lxxxix, 3, 20,) and in the historical books; see 2 S. iii. 18, vii. 5, and vii. 19—29, where David uses it no less than eight times in one prayer. It marks an office, and is applied to prophets, and specially to persons, such as Moses, Joshua, and David, who severally were entrusted with God's work in critical epochs. The references given above shew that David would not hesitate to use it of himself, as expressing his consciousness of a special calling, and inward devotedness; in both respects it corresponds to the title constantly assumed by the apostles; see Rom. i. 1; Tit. i. 1; James i. 1; 2 Pet. i. 1; Jude i. 1; Apoc. i. 1.

spake...the words of this song] Exactly the same formula is used in Deut. xxxi. 30. The reference is evidently intended to mark the peculiarly solemn character of the song. The Hebrew word denotes a hymn adapted for recitation, or singing with the accompaniment of the lyre. Compare Ex. xv. 1; Num. xxi. 17.

from the hand of Saul] The last and the chiefest of David's personal enemies; as such he is fitly mentioned in the inscription of a psalm of general thanksgiving, whether the inscription was written by David, or, as seems more probable, by the compiler of this portion of the psalter.

1. *I will love thee*] The Hebrew word denotes tender affection, and is elsewhere used of God's love to man, not of man's to God. It marks a high development of the spiritual instinct. This verse is omitted in 2 S. xxii.

2. *my rock*] The climax should be noted: the rock, or cliff, comes first as the place of refuge, then the fortress or **fastness**, as a place carefully fortified, then the personal deliverer, without whose intervention escape would have been impossible. The second half of the verse varies the expressions; "my strength" or **rock** (a different word from cliff), used of Horeb, Ex. xvii. 6, and of Jehovah, "the rock of salvation," in the Song of Moses, Deut. xxxii. 4, 15, 18, 30, 31 (see also note on 1 S. ii. 2), doubtless not without reference to the covenant ever present to the mind of "*the servant of the* LORD:" "my shield," first used in reference to Abram. Gen. xv. 1; see note on Ps. iii. 3: "the horn of my salvation," or "my horn of salvation," whether as symbol of strength,—so most commentators ancient and modern—or of height and dignity, the idea, as Dr Kay shews, more generally associated with the word in the psalms; see cxii. 9, and 1 S. ii. 10, and cf. Luke i. 69: lastly, "my high tower," or mountain castle, a figure which combines the ideas of perfect security and dignity. It is remarked (Del.) that we have in this verse seven appellations of Jehovah, the mystic number which in sacred things symbolizes perfection. Other epithets are added in 2 S. xxii., "my refuge, my saviour," apparently as explaining the meaning of the preceding figures, but regarded by Ewald as part of the original text. The words "in Whom I will trust" are the keynote struck by David in Pss. vii. and xi., probably the earliest of his psalms.

3. *I will call*] Or, "I call." David speaks of a general result of prayer, accompanied by a recognition of divine goodness, the object of devout praise.

4. *The sorrows of death compassed me*] Or, **the cords of death surrounded me.** The A. V. follows the LXX. and Vulg. (ὠδῖνες, dolores, thus, too, the Targ.); see also Acts ii. 24: and the Hebrew word occurs frequently in that sense; see Ges. s. v. But from the following verse it is clear that Death is here represented as a hunter: he surrounds

me about: the snares of death prevented me.

6 In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, *even* into his ears.

7 Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth.

† Heb. *by his.*

8 There went up a smoke † out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it.

9 He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness *was* under his feet.

10 And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind.

11 He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him *were* dark waters *and* thick clouds of the skies.

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the field in which he seeks his prey with a hunting net. Aquila *σχοινία*. The reading in 2 S. xxii. 5 is different ("waves" A.V. or "breakers"), and is preferred by Ewald, as keeping to the same metaphor throughout the two clauses of the verse. So too the passage seems to have been read by Jonah, ii. 5, who undoubtedly had this and the two following verses in his mind.

floods of ungodly men] **floods of Belial**, the abstraction or personification of destructive wickedness. David sees himself, so to speak, in a plain surrounded by the hunter's lines, while all chance of escape is cut off by rushing torrents. The reader may compare Dante's fine description of "the headlong sweep" of a flood following a storm raised suddenly by the Evil One; 'Purg.' v. 112—129. See Rev. xii. 15.

5. This verse is not a repetition of the preceding. The cords which then surrounded the field are now drawn close (different verbs are used in the Hebrew), then Death stands in front in the act of casting the net. The same word "prevented," or "came in front of me," is used Ps. xvii. 13; where see note.

6. *distress*] **strait.**

out of his temple] This passage is conclusive as to the use of the word previous to the erection of Solomon's temple: a point of great importance in its bearings upon other psalms; see note on Ps. v. 7 and on xi. 4.

7—15. This passage, unsurpassed in sublimity and grandeur, describes a Theophany, or personal manifestation of the Lord. Natural phenomena supply the imagery, and are described with the minute and graphic accuracy characteristic of Hebrew poetry: earthquake followed by dense smoke, an outburst of flame, and showers of burning coals: then heavy clouds, thick darkness, a sound as of chariot-wheels sped by rushing winds; black thunderclouds rifted by sudden flashes, then the crash of thunder, Jehovah's voice; hailstones intermingled with frequent lightnings. In the brief account of David's victories, 2 S. viii., no mention is made of natural convulsions, but it is hard to resist the impression that the Psalmist describes a storm which he saw, and in which he realized the outward manifestation of God's Presence. It has been often remarked how many great battles have been fought amidst the strife of the elements, and that not merely in sacred history, as in Josh. x. 10, 11, at Beth-horon.

7. *shook and trembled*] Dr Kay expresses the paronomasia (gaash, raash) of the Hebrew by "quailed and quaked:" but the A.V. is accurate and true to nature, first the shock, then the trembling; thus Jerome, "commota est et contremuit." Our translators intentionally avoided such assonances as are common in most ancient languages. See note on x. 18.

8. *out of his nostrils*] Or, "in His anger;" cf. Deut. xxxii. 22: in irâ ejus. Compare, however, *v.* 15.

9. *He bowed the heavens*] So in the storm the clouds lower, descending close down upon the earth, resting on the hill-tops: see Ps. cxliv. 5.

10. *a cherub*] A collective noun meaning cherubim. The cherubim are represented as bearing the throne of God (cf. Ezek. i. 4—28, and note on Gen. iii. 24), it may be as symbolizing the agencies of nature. The rising storm speaks to the Seer of the approach of chariot-wheels (Ezek. i. 16, &c.) rolling over the vault of cloud. Mr Perowne says truly the word "cherub" is a "crux interpretum." It has no Semitic etymology: but the word (in Coptic Xereb, or Hereb) is of Egyptian origin, probably from "karabu" to shape, or hammer, sc. a figure, *χαλκήλατος*.

did fly] The Hebrew word in the second clause is different from that rendered "did fly" in the first. It is very rare, used in Deut. xxviii. 49 of the swoop of an eagle. In 2 S. xxii. 11, the change of a letter (r for d) gives "He was seen," probably an error of transcription. The variation of reading was older than the version of the LXX.; in Samuel, they have *ὤφθη*, but here *ἐπετάσθη*.

11. *darkness*] The Lord is represented as taking His temporary abode, pavilioned, so to

12 At the brightness *that was* before him his thick clouds passed, hail *stones* and coals of fire.

13 The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail *stones* and coals of fire.

14 Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.

15 Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O LORD, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.

16 He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of [1] many waters.

[1] Or, *great waters.*

17 He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me.

18 They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the LORD was my stay.

19 He brought me forth also into a large place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me.

20 The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.

21 For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God.

22 For all his judgments *were* before me, and I did not put away his statutes from me.

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speak, amidst accumulated masses of cloud. There He sits unseen, but near, over the battle-field. Compare Deut. iv. 11; Ps. xcvii. 2.

12. *At the brightness*, &c.] The lightning breaks the clouds, they are rifted, dispersed in scattered masses, down rushes the hail (stored up in God's armoury against the day of battle, Job xxxviii. 22, 23), mingled with fiery flakes; cf. Ex. ix. 23. Another rendering expresses the sense more accurately, "Out of the brightness before Him there passed through His clouds hailstones," &c. Hupf.

13. The thunder follows, God's voice pronouncing judgment. The last clause is omitted in 2 S. and here by a few MSS. and the LXX.: but it is retained generally by critics, as describing the immediate recurrence, or uninterrupted continuance, of the storm.

Hail is rare in Palestine, but, when it falls, causes terrible destruction; see note on Josh. x. 11.

14. The effect of the storm. The enemy, too, recognize the indications of wrath: a sudden panic seizes them, and they are at once *discomfited*; see Ex. xiv. 24, where the same word is used.

15. *channels of waters*] The Hebrew properly denotes the **beds of torrents** flowing through a rocky district; cf. Job vi. 15, and note on Ps. xlii. 1. We may understand this passage to mean that the rocks were cleft, and the waters instantaneously swallowed up; such indeed appears to be a necessary inference from the parallel clause. The words used throughout this description recall Ex. xiv. and xv., a passage certainly present to David's mind. For this reason Ewald prefers the reading 2 S., which instead of "waters" has "sea."

16—19. David now relates in plain terms the results of the divine judgment, referring, however, to the figures previously employed.

16. The reference to the deliverance of Moses, the "servant of God," is clear. The word rendered "He drew me" occurs nowhere but in Ex. ii. 10; where it is used to explain the meaning of the name Moses. The note on that passage shews that it is Egyptian, the word naturally used by the princess, who sent and *took* the child. The *many waters* points back to *v.* 4.

17. *my strong enemy*] David probably goes back to the first deliverance from Saul, but the expression is generally taken collectively.

18. *prevented me*] See *v.* 5.

19. *a large place*] Sc. into open ground, not *compassed* by floods or nets, *vv.* 5, 6. See too note on iv. 1.

delighted in me] See note on xxii. 8, and cf. 2 S. xv. 26. The expression is thoroughly Davidic.

20—24. The moral cause of the interposition, which proves and rewards innocence. Although this passage might have been written after David's fall and recovery, it is far more appropriate to his previous condition. The assertions of righteousness, cleanness of hands (cf. xxiv. 4), &c., are condemned by some critics (see Bleek, 'Einl.' p. 625) as indicating pride and self-reliance, but see note on vii. 8.

21. *wickedly departed from my God*] David uses many other words in the penitential psalms to describe his own guilt, but never uses this, which implies wilful and persistent wickedness. The construction "from my God" is questioned; but it rests on good authority, LXX., and many late critics.

23 I was also upright † before him,
and I kept myself from mine iniquity.

24 Therefore hath the LORD recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands † in his eyesight.

25 With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright;

26 With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt ‖ shew thyself froward.

27 For thou wilt save the afflicted people; but wilt bring down high looks.

28 For thou wilt light my ‖ candle: the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness.

29 For by thee I have ‖ run through a troop; and by my God have I leaped over a wall.

30 *As for* God, his way *is* perfect: [b] the word of the LORD is ‖ tried: he *is* a buckler to all those that trust in him.

31 [c] For who *is* God save the LORD? or who *is* a rock save our God?

32 *It is* God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect.

33 He maketh my feet like hinds' *feet*, and setteth me upon my high places.

† Heb. *with.*
† Heb. *before his eyes.*
‖ Or, *wrestle.*
‖ Or, *lamp.*
‖ Or, *broken.*
[b] Ps. 12. 6. & 119. 140. Prov. 30. 5.
‖ Or, *refined.*
[c] Deut. 32. 31, 39. 1 Sam. 2. 2. Ps. 86. 8. Isai. 45. 5.

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23. *upright*] As Abram, Gen. xvii. 1.

before him] Rather as the marg., "with Him," in my relations to Him.

from mine iniquity] A very important statement in its bearing upon the religious consciousness of David. It recognizes an inward tendency to sin, nay, an inherent sinfulness, but he kept himself in guard against it. The rendering is strictly literal, and the sense thus elicited is preferable to that suggested by Delitzsch, "I kept myself from sin, that it might not be my sin," or by Hupf., "from a sin that I might have committed." Cf. Ps. li. 5, "I was shapen in iniquity." The reference to a special temptation, suggested by Dr Kay, as *e.g.* 2 S. xxiv. 3, is possible, but rather weakens the argument.

24. A repetition of *v.* 20, an emphatic declaration of integrity, concluding with an appeal to Him who seeth the inner man.

25—30. A general view of God's dealings with the just and the unjust.

25. *merciful*] Or, "gracious."

26. *froward*] Or, *with the perverse thou shewest thyself froward.* It is strange that our translators should have used the same word twice, when different words are given in the Hebrew. In dealing with the good, God shews His approval by manifesting attributes similar or identical in essence: in dealing with the wicked He exhibits attributes which are correlative, in just proportion to their acts (see Rom. i. 24—28): He suffers them to be ruined by their own perverseness. The rendering "shew thyself froward" but imperfectly expresses the Hebrew, derived from a root meaning "to twist;" "shew thyself tortuous" comes nearer; nor is the reference to "wrestling" to be rejected; it is a meaning which certainly belongs to the verb, in another and nearly allied form. The Lord so deals with the perverse as to bring them into inextricable perplexity and to overthrow them. Dr Kay refers to Lev. xxvi. 23, 24, where, however, a different word is used.

28. *my candle*] Or, **lamp**. The word is specially used of the golden candlestick in the tabernacle; but generally also as a symbol of life and prosperity; see Job xviii. 6, and xxix. 3; a passage which resembles this very closely, and may have been in the Psalmist's mind. David himself is called the light (*ner*, as in this passage) of Israel, 2 S. xxi. 17; cf. 1 K. xi. 36, xv. 4, and Ps. cxxxii. 17.

29. *run through*] This rendering is probably correct (thus Syr., Hupf., Hitz.); the marg. is accepted by Ew., Perowne, Kay, and either is grammatically possible; but David seems rather to refer to the speed of his pursuit and onslaught. Aq. and Sym. δραμοῦμαι.

a troop] Specially used of light-armed troops sent to plunder an invaded country; *e.g.* thrice of the Amalekites who burnt Ziklag; see 1 S. xxx. 8, 15.

a wall] David may refer to the storming of Zion, an important epoch in his life, and a fitting climax in this passage; see 2 S. v. 6—9, and compare Joel ii. 7. The Hebrew word for "leaped" is used specially of the swift bounding of the hind, Song Sol. ii. 8; Isai. xxxv. 6.

30. *tried*] Or "refined;" see note on xii. 6; the figure occurs frequently.

31. *a rock*] The reference to Deut. xxxii. 4 (see note on *v.* 2) is here unmistakeable.

32. *maketh my way perfect*] With reference to *v.* 30, as His way is perfect. Cf. Matt. v. 48.

33. *hinds' feet*] See note on *v.* 29. Cf. Hab. iii. 19, which is evidently taken from this. Hitz. Ewald ('G. I.' III. p. 79) calls

34 He teacheth my hands to war,
so that a bow of steel is broken by
mine arms.

35 Thou hast also given me the
shield of thy salvation: and thy right
hand hath holden me up, and ‖ thy
gentleness hath made me great.

36 Thou hast enlarged my steps
under me, that † my feet did not slip.

37 I have pursued mine enemies,
and overtaken them: neither did I
turn again till they were consumed.

38 I have wounded them that they
were not able to rise: they are fallen
under my feet.

39 For thou hast girded me with
strength unto the battle: thou hast
† subdued under me those that rose
up against me.

40 Thou hast also given me the
necks of mine enemies; that I might
destroy them that hate me.

41 They cried, but *there was* none
to save *them: even* unto the LORD,
but he answered them not.

42 Then did I beat them small as
the dust before the wind: I did cast
them out as the dirt in the streets.

43 Thou hast delivered me from
the strivings of the people; *and* thou
hast made me the head of the hea-
then: a people *whom* I have not
known shall serve me.

44 † As soon as they hear of me,

‖ Or, *with thy meekness thou hast multiplied me.*
† Heb. *mine ancles.*
† Heb. *caused to bow.*
† Heb. *At the hearing of the ear.*

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attention to the qualifications of David, as a born ruler over men: first of all endued with a sinewy frame, a point in those times of primary importance, created, so to speak, for warfare, capable of immense efforts and unexhausted by prolonged exertions: he notes also the point in which David differed from the heroes of classic antiquity, his ascription of this natural endowment to the special favour of Jehovah. See, however, 'Il.' I. 178.

my high places] My dominions with their fortresses, rocks and mountains. The "my" is emphatic; David waged a war of defence, not of invasion; but cf. Deut. xxxii. 13. The words, however, refer primarily to the hind, remarkable alike for speed and "surefootedness;" Tristram, 'N. H. B.' p. 100. Cf. Song Sol. ii. 17.

34. *so that*, &c.] Or, **so that my arms bend a bow of bronze**:" bronze, highly tempered and elastic, not steel, or brass, was used for bows by the Egyptians and Israelites. The rendering "steel" follows a Rabbinical tradition, Kimchi; but "prior æris erat quam ferri cognitus usus." Lucretius, v. 1285. The force and skill required to bend a hero's bow are spoken of by poets from Homer downwards. The rendering "bend" or "stretch" is well defended by Hupfeld, but the Hebrew form presents some difficulty.

35. *Thou hast also given me the shield*] This clause is omitted in 2 S. Thus Ajax holds his shield over the head of Teucer, while he kneels with bended bow.

thy gentleness] Or, *condescension;* lit. humility, the correlative quality in man: the term is not used elsewhere of God; but cf. Isai. lxiii. 9, and note on *v.* 1 of this psalm. The LXX., Syr., Sym., Theod. and Vulg., take the Hebrew word to mean "Thy chastisement;" but the A.V. has the support of nearly all modern critics. Thus too Aq., Chald. and Hebrew interpreters.

36. *Thou hast enlarged*] Or, made wide room for my steps, clearing away all hindrances: see Ps. xxxi. 8; Prov. iv. 12: for the converse see note on Job xviii. 7.

that my feet] **and my ancles do not slip**: the word denotes unsteadiness, a giving way owing to physical weakness.

39. *subdued*] **bowed down**; the same word is used Ps. xvii. 13, where see note.

40. *Thou hast also given me the necks*] *i.e.* caused them to turn back before me. Lit. "Thou hast given mine enemies to me (by their) neck:" the same phrase is used in Exod. xxiii. 27, where it is more correctly rendered "I will make all thine enemies turn their backs unto thee."

41. This verse seems to refer to a victory over domestic enemies, not over the heathen, who would not call on the Lord: unless indeed it be assumed that a partial knowledge and dread of the Lord had penetrated the peoples bordering on Israel, and speaking cognate dialects. So far as knowledge is concerned, the fact that the *name* of Jehovah was familiar to the Moabites is proved by its occurrence on the now famous inscription of Mesha: after the final defeat of Moab that knowledge may have issued in fear of Him, Whose superiority to Chemosh was proved by their own test of might. Cf. Judg. xi. 24.

43. *the head of the heathen*] Or, "head of nations." David saw in his foreign conquests a pledge of the fulfilment of Messianic prophecies; see especially Ps. ii. 8.

44. *As soon as they hear*, &c.] The answer of an eastern to his sovereign's command, "to hear is to obey." Kay refers to 2 S. viii. 9, 10; Ps. xxii. 27; Isai. lv. 5.

they shall obey me: † the strangers shall ‖ † submit themselves unto me.

45 The strangers shall fade away, and be afraid out of their close places.

46 The LORD liveth; and blessed *be* my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted.

47 *It is* God that † avengeth me, and ‖ subdueth the people under me.

48 He delivereth me from mine enemies: yea, thou liftest me up above those that rise up against me: thou hast delivered me from the † violent man.

49 [d] Therefore will I ‖ give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name.

50 Great deliverance giveth he to his king; and sheweth mercy to his anointed, to David, and to his seed for evermore.

† Heb. *the sons of the stranger.*
‖ Or, *yield feigned obedience.*
† Heb. *lie.*
† Heb. *giveth avengements for me.*
‖ Or, *destroyeth.*
† Heb. *man of violence.*
[d] Rom. 15.
‖ Or, *confess.*

PSALM XIX.

1 *The creatures shew God's glory.* 7 *The word his grace.* 12 *David prayeth for grace.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

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submit] Or, **flatter me**, lit. lie to me, *i.e.* as in marg. yield feigned obedience, the obedience of fear: cf. Deut. xxxiii. 29; Ps. lxvi. 3, lxxxi. 15. Thus Ros., Hupf., Kay, &c. In the corresponding passage of 2 S. a word is used, slightly differing in form, but with the same meaning.

45. *be afraid*] The Hebrew word occurs only in this passage. It probably means, "will flee trembling." Ros., Ew., Hupf., &c. Cf. Mic. vii. 17.

46—50. The triumphant close of the hymn at once presents the leading thoughts of gratitude for deliverance, and firm trust in Jehovah, and predicts the fulfilment of all His promises.

46. *The LORD liveth*] Cf. Ps. xlii. 2, "the living God," and *v.* 8, "the God of my life." Ewald takes it as an archaism equivalent to "Blessed be God."

47. *avengeth me*] Or, "who giveth avengements to me," or "awardeth retributions to me:" cf. 2 S. iv. 9, 10; an important passage as bearing upon David's character, and his repudiation of private acts of vengeance. The reference to 2 S. x. 4, touching the provocation to the war of which this hymn celebrates the results, is of some value, but the statement is general; in all successes David saw retributive justice.

subdueth] The Hebrew word occurs twice only (see Ps. xlvii. 3) in this sense; but the rendering rests on good authority, and is accepted by critics. It has the special meaning of keeping in subjection, as a flock to the shepherd. Cf. Ps. ii. 9.

48. *the violent man*] The expression may be general; see note on *v.* 17; but, considering that the psalm specially commemorates deliverance from all enemies, there is no reason why this distinctive and accurate designation should not point to Saul, the chief of David's persecutors, and, as such, expressly named in the very ancient, if not contemporary, inscription.

49. St Paul, Rom. xv. 9, applies this to our Lord. David evidently speaks with a consciousness that his mission, as head of the Theocracy, and, as such, forerunner and type of Christ, was not confined to Israel: it involved the proclamation of God's might and goodness to the heathen, undoubtedly with a view to the fulfilment of the original promise to Abram, Gen. xii. 2, 3, and the extension of God's mercies to all nations. Cf. Ps. lxvi. 4, lxxii. 11.

50. The close of the hymn refers, as critics generally admit (Hitz., &c.), to the solemn declaration communicated through Nathan, 2 S. vii.: see especially *vv.* 12—16, 26—29.

David] This is the only passage in which David names himself; it may be with reference to the special promise through Nathan "to thy servant David," or because the psalm was intended for public recitation, reminding the whole nation of the grounds on which their allegiance to the house of David rested.

The question whether the text of the psalm is more ancient or more accurate in the book of Samuel or here has been much discussed. Both texts have internal proofs of independence and originality: in fact it is now admitted that neither could have been taken from the other: nor are the deviations generally such as could be accounted for by inaccurate transcription. The most natural and probable explanation is, that David towards the close of his reign prepared a revision for public recitation.

PSALM XIX.

This psalm, universally regarded as one of the profoundest and most affecting of David's compositions, is especially remarkable for the vivid contrast, and at the same time the inner harmony, which it recognizes between the results of natural and revealed religion. The heavens, as Bacon observes, declare the glory, but not the will of God: that is known only by His law, re-

a Gen. 1. 6.

THE a heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

2 Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

3 *There is* no speech nor language, ‖ † *where* their voice is not heard.

4 b ‖ Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun,

‖ Or, *without these their voice is heard.*

† Heb. *without their voice heard.*

b Rom. 10. 18.

‖ Or, *Their rule,* or, *direction.*

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vealed to man as the perfect expression of that will, for his conversion, instruction and guidance.

It would appear to belong to the same period of David's life as the preceding psalm, with which it has an intimate connection. At the close of that psalm (see *vv.* 43, 49) the king declares his mission to the heathen; in this he dwells first upon the preparation for such work by natural agencies, then upon the instruments by which it could be effected; in both speaking in accordance with our Lord and His Apostles (cf. Matt. v. 45, vi. 26—33; Acts xiv. 15—17, and xvii. 24—31); David, it may be for this reason, calls himself a servant of God, *vv.* 11, 13. The psalm has other indications of belonging to the king's sunny and hopeful manhood. As in other early psalms (see note on xviii. 23), he has the consciousness of inherent and secret sinfulness, *v.* 12, and of the danger of falling into wilful sin, but it is clear that he has not committed the great transgression, from which he prays to be preserved.

There is a marked difference between the style of the two portions of the psalm. The former has fuller and more varied cadences, the latter is more pointed and compact; but there is, notwithstanding, a pervading harmony, recognized by severe critics. In both the language is at once forcible and sweet, with frequent archaisms and vivid imagery; and it has been noted that in both there is a fundamental identity of structure, each consisting of fourteen clauses, arranged in six or eight strophes of nearly equal length. The former portion, as might be expected, is richer in imagery, the naturalistic element of poetry; the latter, in deep and holy feelings, movements of a heart stirred to its depths by God's law.

1. *declare*] Or, "recount."

God] Hebrew, "El;" a name which denotes the majesty and power of God. It is the only name which occurs in the first part of this psalm, and here once only, in studied antithesis to the name Jehovah, which is used, exclusively, seven times in the second part. David celebrates the *glory* of El, the God of nature, the *law* of Jehovah, the God of the Covenant. Ex. vi. 3.

sheweth] Or, **proclaimeth.**

2. *uttereth speech*] Lit. "poureth forth speech." Each day overflows with utterances full of meaning, which it transmits to its successor. The word is used specially of religious and prophetic utterances, as in Ps. lxxviii. 2; Prov. i. 23, where A.V. has "pour out."

sheweth knowledge] The Hebrew word occurs elsewhere only in the book of Job, xv. 17, xxxvi. 2. It means properly "quickeneth," "keepeth alive;" that is, gives a living quickening knowledge, as though contemplation of the starry firmament awakened deeper, more spiritual thoughts than the brightness of day. Thus, too, in the first clause, "speech" denotes an outward communication; "knowledge," in the second clause, the inward apprehension. Bishop Horne remarks of day and night thus occupied, they are "like two parts of a choir, chanting forth alternately the praises of God."

3. *There is no speech*, &c.] This translation gives a clear sense, well adapted to the context; it is supported by the ancient versions, and some critics (Vaihinger), and is grammatically defensible. Other renderings are proposed, of which the two most generally accepted are, (1) "That is no speech, no words, whose sound is not heard," *i.e.* the speech and words which tell of God's glory are heard by all (thus Vitringa, Hitz., Moll). (2) "There is no speech, there are no words, all inaudible is their voice;" thus Hupfeld, Ewald, Perowne, Kay. The rendering is literal and grammatical, but it introduces a thought which is scarcely in accordance with the preceding and following verses.

4. *Their line*] The translation is exact, but the meaning is disputed. The word "line" has in Hebrew the special sense of a boundary line marking the extent of dominion; it is thus understood in this passage by Hupfeld and some other critics, and apparently by our translators. The more general, and the oldest, interpretation is "sound," specially sound produced by harp-strings, or, as Dr Kay holds, "the regulative string." The sense thus elicited suits the context, but it is not supported by Hebrew usage. In all other passages line (kav) means either a measuring line, or a rule (sc. of conduct), a precept or decree; nor would the last sense be unsuitable; the decree of the heavens goes forth, proclaiming the glory of God, and the duty of worshipping Him. See Note below.

5 Which *is* as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, *and* rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.

6 His going forth *is* from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

7 The ‖ law of the LORD *is* perfect, ‖ converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple.

8 The statutes of the LORD *are* right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD *is* pure, enlightening the eyes.

9 The fear of the LORD *is* clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD *are* † true *and* righteous altogether.

‖ Or, *doctrine.* ‖ Or, *restoring.* † Heb. *truth.*

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their words] The Hebrew again recalls the book of Job, in which the word here used occurs frequently (see Ges. 'Th.' s. v.); a fact of some moment, as bearing upon the antiquity of this psalm, and of that book; and as indicating the influence of Job upon David's mind, an influence perhaps making itself specially felt in dealing with the question of natural religion.

5. *bridegroom*] The symbol of youthful vigour and happiness, or of the beginning of a new life; adopted by our Lord, though with special reference to the bride.

out of his chamber] Joel ii. 16.

as a strong man] The epithet is applied to the sun in Judg. v. 31. Elsewhere to God, El, of Whom the sun is a type; Isai. ix. 6, El Gibbor, "the mighty God."

6. *going forth*] Cf. Mic. v. 2. The imagery of this verse should not be pressed as presenting a theory of the earth's form. The poet describes simply what he observes.

nothing hid] The heat of the sun, which is the condition of physical life, reaches as far as the teaching of the heavens; they instruct all, he quickens all. Hence the fitness of the symbol, and of the application to the Lord Christ and His apostles, Rom. x. 18.

The connection between the two parts of this psalm is questioned, but the analogy between the order and light of the universe and God's moral law lies very deep. It is recognized by Greek philosophy, by the very word κόσμος; and by Confucius, see the 12th chap. §§ 3 and 4 of the 'Tchung Yung.' It seems strange that this most beautiful of all expressions of so great a thought should be ignored by a Christian thinker.

7. The praise of God's law now follows in a rapid flow of short clauses, each with *a double beat* (Del.), expressing the warm emotion of the Psalmist's heart. The first word involves all that can be said, the law is perfect, a complete revelation of God's will; in St Paul's words, "the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good," Rom. vii. 12; a passage of extreme importance, connected as it is with his view of the inefficacy of the law to control the will, even while the sinner's reason consents to it as good, *v.* 16.

converting] Or, as in marg., **restoring**, lit. bringing it back, sc. from ignorance and sin; the word involves the idea of deliverance and refreshment. The converting efficacy depends, of course, upon its application to the heart by the Spirit, a point which David may have discerned but imperfectly, and was not commissioned to declare.

the testimony] Used specially of the Decalogue; see Exod. xxv. 16.

the simple] The word is used in its original and natural sense; it denotes one whose consciousness or reason is as yet undeveloped: the "testimony" supplies what is needful; if rejected, it leaves the "simple" self-condemned, and then "simple" becomes, like other names for folly in Hebrew, synonymous with "sinful."

8. *enlightening the eyes*] See note on xiii. 3; and compare the effect of the honey juice upon the eyes of Jonathan, 1 S. xiv. 27. The expression includes the gift of comfort and joy as well as knowledge.

9. *The fear of the* LORD] Godly fear, the fear of reverence inseparable from love, "which never faileth."

the judgments] The order in which the six words describing God's law occur should be observed. 1. The law, of which the fundamental principle is instruction (Heb. *thorah*, from *yarah*, teach). 2. The testimony, *i.e.* warning; God's appeal to the conscience, bearing witness to the law. 3. Statutes, or, more exactly, visitations, securing obedience, or checking infringements of the law. 4. Commandments, *i.e.* precepts, better understood as man advances under the teaching of the law. 5. The fear of God, the settled habit of the soul informed by the law. 6. The judgments, the final awards of the Giver of the law. The omission of "*the Word*" is noticeable. David may have regarded it as synonymous with "the law;" and in this passage his object is specially to set forth the beauty of "the law" as the rule of life, and the expression of God's will.

10 More to be desired *are they* than gold, [c]yea, than much fine gold: [d]sweeter also than honey and [†] the honeycomb.

11 Moreover by them is thy servant warned: *and* in keeping of them *there is* great reward.

12 Who can understand *his* errors? cleanse thou me from secret *faults*.

13 Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous *sins;* let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from [‖] the great transgression.

14 Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, [†] my strength, and my redeemer.

[c] Ps. 119. 72, 127. Prov. 8. 19.
[d] Ps. 119. 103.
[†] Heb. *the dropping of honeycombs.*
[‖] Or, *much.*
[†] Heb. *my rock.*

10, 11. These verses describe the emotions felt, and the effects experienced, by God's servant. The law excites the strongest desires and satisfies them completely. The great reward is *in keeping* it, rather than in the blessing which follows.

10. *honeycomb*] Or, "the droppings of the honeycomb;" the same word is used 1 S. xiv. 27.

12. *Who can understand his errors?*] The strain here changes suddenly; the Psalmist applies the law to himself. As for errors, sins of ignorance, or infirmity, who can discern them? "He knows nothing by himself (is not conscious of special sin), yet is he not thereby justified" (1 Cor. iv. 4); secret sins, or "hidden sins," need cleansing, *i.e.* both pardon and expiation.

cleanse] Make or hold me guiltless.

13. *presumptuous sins*] The Hebrew word so rendered corresponds in meaning to the presumptuous sins, which in Num. xv. 30 are declared to be unpardonable; in contradistinction from sins of ignorance. The difference is not in the act, but in the intention. The form of the word is peculiar, but occurs six times in the cxixth Ps., lit. "presumptuous ones:" whether, as if sins were realized as personal enemies (Kay), or more probably with reference to their manifold and ever-varying forms. David's sins more than once reached, and once overpassed, the limitary line between error and presumption, but they were not repeated when brought home thoroughly to his conscience.

the great transgression] Or, "and guiltless from great transgression:" the word "great" is emphatic, guilt matured, fully developed. May not this earnest, touching prayer indicate an inward consciousness of liability to the special temptation of the king?

14. The prayer is general, but has doubtless a special reference to the psalm, as expressing the result of devout meditation upon God's works and Jehovah's law.

my strength] **my rock**, as in Ps. xviii. 2.

my redeemer] The expression occurs first Gen. xlviii. 16, "The Angel which redeemed me from all evil." When applied to God it is always in the sense of a deliverer, who maintains the cause of His own people, and ransoms, or, more generally, saves them. The use of the word in legal transactions is secondary. See Note on Job xix. 25.

NOTE on PSALM XIX. 4.

קו from קוה, as in Arab., to twist, or bind, hence, "to be strong," has the radical meaning of a line, or "bond," that which fastens. In Isai. xxvii i. 10 it is coupled with צו, a precept, and means, probably, a decree, or binding law: in Ezek. xlvii. 3 and 2 K. xxi. 13, a measuring line: in Isai. xviii. 2 it may mean "strength;" thus Ges. and Knobel: but "decree" is more satisfactory, "a nation of decree upon decree;" sc. of fixed rules, settled forms. It seems a bold process, scarcely justified by Hebrew usage, to take קו first as a measuring line, then simply as a cord, then as a harp-string (the regulator, Dr Kay), then as the sound produced by the harp-string (though for the last change the analogy of τόνος from τείνω might be adduced). "Decree," on the contrary, adheres to the radical meaning and use of the word, and yields an apt and forcible sense.

PSALM XX.

1 *The church blesseth the king in his exploits.*
7 *Her confidence in God's succour.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

THE LORD hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob [†] defend thee;

2 Send [†] thee help from the sanc-

[†] Heb. *set thee on an high place.*
[†] Heb. *thy help.*

PSALM XX.

This psalm and the following one are closely connected. This contains the supplications of the people on behalf of the king, going forth on a martial expedition; the other expresses their joy at his triumph. The special notices, *vv.* 7, 8, seem to point

† Heb. *support thee.*

† Heb. *turn to ashes:* or, *make fat.*

tuary, and †strengthen thee out of Zion;

3 Remember all thy offerings, and †accept thy burnt sacrifice; Selah.

4 Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel.

5 We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up *our* banners: the LORD fulfil all thy petitions.

6 Now know I that the LORD saveth his anointed; he will hear him †from his holy heaven †with the saving strength of his right hand.

† Heb. *from the heaven of his holiness.*

† Heb. *by the strength of the salvation of his right hand.*

7 Some *trust* in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God.

8 They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright.

9 Save, LORD: let the king hear us when we call.

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to the war with the Syrians (see 2 S. x. 17—19), but are suitable to any of the foreign wars which occupied so large a portion of David's reign. Both psalms are attributed to David in the inscriptions, nor is there any good reason to question the assertion. David, as the representative of the nation and "servant of the Lord," was quite justified in putting such petitions into the mouths of the people. Both psalms were evidently composed for public and liturgical recitation; and were probably sung by the priests and the people, or its representatives, in the court, or at the gate of the tabernacle. Ewald, who thinks that this psalm may have been composed in Asa's reign, admits that the language, the vivid imagery, simple grandeur of style, and warm expressions of trust in the Lord, not surpassed in any temple-hymn, point to the time of David.

1. *trouble*] Literally "strait."

defend thee] The marginal rendering is more accurate; the people pray not merely for the safety, but for the triumph of their king, that he may be set on high, raised over his enemies.

2. *help*] **Thy help** in the margin is correct and forcible: the help on which the king might depend, pledged to him by gracious promises. Cf. Ps. xxii. 1 and 1 K. viii. 30.

sanctuary] The word suits the reign of David, when the sanctuary was fixed in Jerusalem, but the temple was not yet built. This psalm was probably recited by the priests and people immediately after the offering of sacrifices.

3. *Remember*] The word has a special reference to the *mincha* which the priest burnt upon the altar, as a *memorial*, an appeal to God to remember the giver. See notes on Lev. ii. 1, 2; Acts x. 4.

thy offerings] The king offered sacrifices in person, especially on great occasions, such as the beginning of a war, or before a battle. There is no interference with the proper functions of the priesthood in this; animals might be offered and sacrificed by the heads of families. The offerings consisted both of the mincha, fine flour with oil and frankincense, and whole burnt-offerings, representing the gratitude and absolute devotion of the worshippers.

accept] Or, "approve," lit. as in the marg. "make fat." The people pray that God may regard the offerings as fat, *i.e.* befitting the occasion, the best that the king could present: compare Mal. i. 8.

5. This verse, which consists of three clauses, completes the first division of the psalm.

rejoice] Or, "shout;" the word expresses the jubilant shout of a host assured of victory.

6. *Now know I*] These words are either spoken by the king in person, or by the High-priest representing the nation.

7. *chariots*] The prohibition against keeping numerous war-horses was observed by David, who carried on his campaigns with infantry: thus shewing at once obedience to the law, and a just appreciation of the wisdom of the injunction. In a struggle with nations formidable for their chariotry (see especially 2 S. viii. 4, x. 18), the best and surest defence was a well-trained army of foot-soldiers. David's armies consisted of the same materials and used the same weapons which of old won so many great victories for England. Ewald has good observations on this point, 'Gesch.' III. p. 186. There may be a reference to the fact stated 2 S. x. 18; "David slew *the men of* 700 chariots of the Syrians, and 40,000 horsemen;" where see note.

8. The verse represents the anticipated result as already achieved; the future victory is realized by faith. In fact the ambiguity of Hebrew expression for past and future time, which sometimes occasions difficulty in the interpretation, represents the inward state of the speaker, to whom the past and future have the vividness and reality of the present.

9. *let the king*] Delitzsch observes that this designation of Jehovah, put into the mouth of the people while praying for their king, is favourable to the authorship by David. The argument is not conclusive, but would have considerable weight if the construction could

PSALM XXI.

1 *A thanksgiving for victory.* 7 *Confidence of further success.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

THE king shall joy in thy strength, O LORD; and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!

2 Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips. Selah.

3 For thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness: thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head.

4 He asked life of thee, *and* thou gavest *it* him, *even* length of days for ever and ever.

5 His glory *is* great in thy salvation: honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him.

6 For thou hast † made him most blessed for ever: thou hast † made him exceeding glad with thy countenance.

† Heb. *set him* to be *blessings.*
† Heb. *gladded him with joy.*

7 For the king trusteth in the LORD, and through the mercy of the most High he shall not be moved.

8 Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies: thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee.

9 Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the LORD shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them.

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be relied upon. It is however probable that the true meaning is "Jehovah save the king, may He answer us when we call." Thus Hupf., Ew., and most modern commentators, following the LXX. and Vulg. The A.V. has the Hebrew punctuation, the Targ., Jerome, and Syr. in its favour, and is defended by Del., and Dr Kay.

This psalm has a genuine Messianic character, if not as directly referring to the future King of Israel, yet as idealizing the anointed representative of the Theocracy.

PSALM XXI.

The Messianic character, noted in the preceding psalm, is brought out far more distinctly in this, which although doubtless suggested by the fulfilment of the hopes expressed in that, and directly applicable to special circumstances in the Ammonitish and Syrian campaign, goes far beyond the occasion, and describes aspirations and convictions which could only be realized in the ideal head of the Theocracy. This was felt so strongly by the Rabbins, that one of the ablest, Rashi, says, "This was interpreted of the King Messiah by our ancient teachers, but in order to meet the schismatics (*i.e.* Christians) it is better to understand it of David himself." The structure of the psalm befits a pæan: a short strophe, two verses with Selah; two longer strophes, each of five verses, and an ejaculatory close.

1. *The king*] The Targum renders this "The King-Messiah."

2. *desire*] A distinct allusion to the wishes expressed in Ps. xx. 4.

3. *preventest*] The word faithfully expresses the feeling that the gifts are of God's free favour and grace.

a crown] This was literally done, after the close of the Ammonitish war, when David took the king's golden crown, and it was set on David's head, 2 S. xii. 30; but there may be a reference to Ps. viii. 5, and Bishop Wordsworth points out a connection with Rev. vi. 2; see the next note.

4. This verse may be interpreted as simply expressing exaggerated feelings of loyalty towards the victorious king, but it is more natural to regard it as one of the many indications that the ideal King, the Messiah, whom David represented, was present to the Psalmist's mind; suggesting an expression which otherwise could hardly be justified, unless indeed it referred to a future life.

6. *blessed*] Rather, as in the margin, "blessings;" *i.e.* a source or realization of blessings, an allusion to Gen. xii. 2; cf. Eph. i. 3.

with thy countenance] Not merely by displaying goodness and favour, but by admission to personal intercourse and communion.

8. The following verses are addressed by the people, or by the High-priest, to the king: the victory already won is to the nation an assurance of conquest over all enemies.

9. *a fiery oven*] This might be explained as a reference to the conquest of Rabbah, which was decided by the personal appearance of the king; the Ammonites were then exterminated, part being made to pass through the brick-kiln: 2 S. xii. 31. If so, it would be a remarkable instance of the blending of sincere and lofty devotion with fierce national feelings, explicable, though not justified, by the cruel usages of all ancient warfare. It is, however, more probably a general denunciation of destruction to the enemies of the Lord.

10 Their fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men.

11 For they intended evil against thee: they imagined a mischievous device, *which* they are not able *to perform*.

12 Therefore ‖shalt thou make them turn their †back, *when* thou shalt make ready *thine arrows* upon thy strings against the face of them.

‖ Or, *thou shalt set them as a butt.* † Heb. *shoulder.*

13 Be thou exalted, LORD, in thine own strength: *so* will we sing and praise thy power.

PSALM XXII.

1 *David complaineth in great discouragement.* 9 *He prayeth in great distress.* 23 *He praiseth God.*

To the chief Musician upon ‖Aijeleth Shahar, A Psalm of David.

‖ Or, *the hind of the morning.*

MY [a]God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? *why art*

[a] Matt. 27. 46. Mark 15. 34.

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12. *turn their back*] Lit. "the shoulder:" a common expression for putting to flight; cf. xviii. 40. The imagery is Davidic; see note on Ps. iii. 6.

PSALM XXII.

This psalm has been always inexpressibly dear to the Church. No psalm sets forth so completely the combination of suffering and righteousness, of utter prostration and internal sense of union with God, of grief amounting to despondency and certainty of God's future manifestation of Himself, His kingdom and His righteousness. We are assured of its prophetical character by distinct statements in the New Testament; by references in all the Evangelists; by the express notices of Matt. xxvii. 35, and John xix. 24; by the ascription of one saying to Christ in Heb. ii. 12; above all, by our Lord's own adoption of the first words on the cross; see Matt. xxvii. 46; Mark xv. 34. In fact, all the circumstances of the crucifixion are described with a minuteness and accuracy which critics are all but unanimous in recognizing, (thus even Hupf. notices "the certainly most striking coincidence of details with the history of the Passion,") while the future triumphs of the Church, extending to all nations, are depicted with equal completeness.

It is attributed to David: nor is there anything in the language or tone of thought which indicates a later origin. It abounds indeed in expressions which occur frequently, or exclusively, in psalms generally admitted to have been composed by David (see reff. on *vv.* 3, 11, 16, 20, 26). To what period of his life it should be assigned may be open to question; the development of Messianic anticipations in the latter portion (27—31, compare xviii. 43—50) points, perhaps, as Moll assumes, to the full maturity of manhood; but the figures, under which the enemies and the sufferings of the Psalmist are represented, would seem to be suggested by the circumstances of his flight from Saul (see *vv.* 12, 13, 16—21). And this impression is confirmed by the fact that in no part of this psalm are there any signs of the consciousness of great transgression, such as occur in penitential psalms of the king's later years. But although the imagery, as in the case of all the prophets, may have been suggested by the personal experience of the writer, it is certain that the principal traits do not apply to David. They set before us an individual who is an object of reviling and scorn (6—8), without a helper (11), surrounded by enemies who overmaster him (16, 20, 21), and part his garments among them: whose bones are racked, whose heart is broken, who is brought into the dust of death (14, 15). David was at no time without a helper; at the court of Saul he had Jonathan; in his banishment he was surrounded by faithful friends; the Gibborim were with him in his flight from Absalom: far from being despised by the people, their love and admiration were the causes of his persecution. Nor can any other individual in the sacred history be pointed out, to whom these circumstances in their combination are applicable. From first to last they are true of the Man of Sorrows, and of Him alone.

The only explanation which meets and satisfies all the conditions of a sound exegesis, that which has been held fast by the Church in all times, and has a sure foundation in Holy Scripture, is that the Psalmist was moved by the Spirit of Christ, so that, whether consciously or unconsciously, he recorded his afflictions, and expressed his hopes, in language which found its perfect fulfilment in the Messiah, of Whom David undoubtedly was, and knew himself to be, one of the very chiefest types. This view indeed is not peculiar to the Christian Church: it is found in early Rabbinical writers, some of whom interpret the inscription "the hind of the dawn" as the name of the Shechinah, and symbol of the redemption by Christ, while others declare that "the whole life of David was a typical representation of the Messiah:" thus the 'Yalkut Khadash;' see Wünsche, 'Die Leiden des Messias,' p. 87.

Those critics who refuse to accept David as the author are influenced solely by the difficulty of reconciling the description with any events in the life of the king. All admit the beauty and power of the language, which Ewald declares truly to be unsurpassable.

† Heb. *from my salvation.*

thou so far † from helping me, *and* *from* the words of my roaring?

2 O my God, I cry in the day-time, but thou hearest not; and in

They differ altogether, as might be expected, as to the date to which it should be assigned. Some, even Perowne, follow Kimchi, the subtle and unscrupulous opponent of Messianic interpretations pointing to our Lord, and hold that it was written by some unknown exile during the Babylonish captivity. But Ewald shews (from *vv.* 4, 27) that it must have been composed when the temple, or tabernacle, was yet standing. Hitzig attributes it to Jeremiah on grounds which no other critic considers satisfactory. Maurer observes justly that the author must have been a man of wealth and high station, "qui magna auctoritate valeret."

The psalm has three distinct parts. The first (1—11) describes the deep anguish of the sufferer apparently forsaken by God, and despised by man, alternating with strong expressions of trust in God's holiness and love. In the second (12—21), the circumstances which cause the anguish are vividly portrayed, but the description is blended with earnest and devout supplication. In the third part (22—31), the strain changes suddenly, the psalm calls on all to join in praising God for an accomplished deliverance, and announces the extension of God's kingdom to all kindreds of the earth.

The metrical system is regular, six strophes each of five verses, with one ejaculatory verse, the 11th, separating the second from the third strophe.

Aijeleth Shahar] Or, *ayyeleth hash-shakhar*, correctly rendered in the marg. "hind of the morning." The words either designate a time for the guidance of the precentor, or, more probably, as Hengstenberg shews, they indicate the subject-matter of the poem. It is a figure under which the Psalmist might naturally represent the character and the sufferings of the person who is set before us. The grace and beauty of the hind, and its love of solitary and lofty places, are frequently noticed in the Bible (*e. g.* Gen. xlix. 21; Prov. v. 19; Song Sol. ii. 8, 9, viii. 14), and suggest similes to portray the character of David himself in Ps. xviii. 33: the Psalmist (xlii. 1) compares the longing for God to the panting of the hart after the water-brooks. Not less important are the notices in which David (2 S. i. 19) compares the death of Jonathan to that of a roe (צְבִי A.V. "beauty;" see Tristram 'Nat. Hist. B.' p. 127); and escape from danger is represented as the flight of a roe from the hunter, Prov. vi. 5. A similar metaphor is probably used in the title of the 56th psalm, and accords well with the style of David, whose compositions abound in symbols drawn from the animal world, in none more frequent or more striking than in this psalm. The epithet "of the morning" may possibly refer to the flight of the hind from the hunters in early dawn; or, as in many other passages, morning may symbolize the deliverance from persecution; cf. Isai. lviii. 8; Hos. vi. 3; 2 S. xxiii. 4; but in eastern poetry the horns of the roe, or of the gazelle, are used as a metaphor for the rays of the rising sun; an application which may have been in the mind of the Psalmist. It is obvious that, while each and all of these figures are suitable to the character and position of David, they apply in a far deeper and more spiritual sense to Him of whom David was a type.

1. *why hast thou forsaken me?*] In the person of David this would be an expression not of despair, but at once of amazement and of longing. He knows that God is truly *his* God; the forsaking therefore can but have a loving motive, to be explained ere the end come. In the person of Christ it directs attention to the cause of the infliction. The words "look upon me" in our Psalter are taken from the Vulgate, which follows the LXX.; they are probably a gloss, but shew a true appreciation of the Psalmist's longing after God. It is observable that the citation of this passage by our Saviour (see reff.) agrees with the Targum so far as regards the verb *sabacthani*, but follows the Hebrew in the word *lama*, for which the Targ. has *metul ma*, with the same meaning. From this it may, perhaps, be inferred that the Chaldee paraphrase in our Lord's time resembled, but was not identical with, that in our Polyglott.

from helping me] Rather, as in marg., **from my salvation.** To the godly man the presence or manifestation of God is identical with salvation. The word "my" is emphatic; the salvation which is mine by promise or covenant; cf. Ps. xx. 2, marg.

and from] These words are not in the original; they may express the true sense; but the ellipsis is unusual, and if they are omitted the meaning will be "far from my salvation are the words of my roaring." This follows the old Greek versions (LXX., Aq., Sym., Theod.; see Field, 'Hexapla' in loc.) and the Vulg.: it is defended by Delitzsch and Dr Kay. The construction, however, is difficult, and Hupfeld divides the clauses thus, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? *Such are* the words of my roaring."

roaring] A very strong word, used properly of the roar of the lion: it denotes the loud and bitter outcry of one in the extremity of suffering; thus Ps. xxxii. 3; Job iii. 24. St Matthew, xxvii. 46, has the Greek word which corresponds to it most nearly, ἀνεβόησε.

the night season, and † am not silent.

3 But thou *art* holy, *O thou* that inhabitest the praises of Israel.

4 Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.

5 They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.

6 But I *am* a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.

7 [b] All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they † shoot out the lip, they shake the head, *saying*,

8 [c] † He trusted on the LORD *that* he would deliver him: let him deliver him, ‖ seeing he delighted in him.

9 But thou *art* he that took me out of the womb: thou ‖ didst make me hope *when I was* upon my mother's breasts.

10 I was cast upon thee from the

† Heb. there is *no silence to me.*

[b] Matt. 27. 39. † Heb. *open.*

[c] Matt. 27. 43. † Heb. *He rolled* himself *on the* LORD. ‖ Or, *if he delight in him.*

‖ Or, *kept me in safety.*

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2. *hearest not*] **answerest not**; sc. by helping me.

am not silent] Or, "there is no silence, or cessation, for me." The ceaseless moaning wins no relief; cf. Jer. xiv. 17.

3. *thou art holy*] The holiness of God is a pledge of deliverance to the godly: a point of importance here, as in the highest sense applicable to Him who alone among the sons of men is "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," Heb. vii. 26. See also Luke xxiii. 4. The LXX. appear to have had a different reading, "in the sanctuary." Thus, too, Sym., ἐν ἁγίοις; see Field, 'Hexapla.'

inhabitest, &c.] Or, "dwellest among." God is thus represented as enthroned in His sanctuary, where the praises and adorations of His worshippers, symbolized by the streams of incense, rise continually before Him. The word "inhabitest" refers to the throne, of which the cherubim, whose forms were on the mercy seat, are the mystic supporters; see note on xviii. 10. The reference to the sanctuary as not only existing, but attended by crowds of worshippers, is recognized by Ewald and Hupfeld; see introductory remarks. The appeal expresses with infinite tenderness and delicacy the thought that, since God is ever receiving the prayers of His people, He will surely answer them in the person of their representative: a thought enlarged upon in the following verses.

6. *a worm*] Cf. Job xxv. 6; Isai. xli. 24, marg.: as in this latter passage the word denotes utter helplessness and humiliation, but not personal guilt, of which there is no trace in this Messianic psalm. The general resemblance between this passage and the prophecies of Isaiah, in which the sufferings and humiliation of Christ are most distinctly depicted, is of extreme importance in determining the application.

a reproach of men] Compare Ps. lxix. 9, applied to our Lord by St Paul, Rom. xv. 3.

despised of the people] Cf. Isai. xlix. 7, liii. 3. This could only be applied in a very secondary sense to David. Saul's fury was caused by the directly opposite feelings on the part of the people.

7. *All they that see me*] Compare the words in this verse with those used by the Evangelists. "All they that see me laugh me to scorn,"—Luke xxiii. 35, "the people stood beholding" (θεωρῶν, here the LXX. has θεωροῦντες): and again "derided," where the Greek has ἐξεμυκτήρισαν, the word here used by the LXX. "They shake the head," LXX. ἐκίνησαν κεφαλήν: Matt. xxvii. 39; Mark xv. 29; κινοῦντες τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν.

8. *He trusted on the* LORD] The adoption of these words by the enemies of our Lord is testified by St Matthew; see marg. ref. It is evident that they quoted from the LXX. version, without distinctly remembering the context. Our translation expresses the true meaning, but the construction of the Hebrew is somewhat difficult: probably the exact rendering is "trust in the LORD; let Him deliver him." The words either are spoken tauntingly by the persecutors, or refer to the habitual expression of trust now cast in the teeth of the sufferer. (גֹּל is now generally admitted to be the imperative, as in other passages where this form occurs. The expression is elliptical, lit. roll, *i.e.* thy way, or thy cares.)

seeing] This is preferable to the marg. The enemies say with bitter irony "for He delighteth in him." The citation in St Matthew "if He will have him" (εἰ θέλει αὐτόν) corresponds nearly to the LXX. (ὅτι θέλει αὐτόν), "for He will have him." It should be observed that the Hebrew (חפֵץ בּוֹ), "He delighted in him," is exactly equivalent to ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα, "in whom I am well-pleased" (see Matt. iii. 17), and is rendered by that word in four passages of the LXX. (see Tromm. 'Conc.' s.v.). This points directly to the "beloved Son."

9. *didst make me hope*] Or, "didst keep me trustful." The Psalmist recalls the sweet trustfulness of infancy, which he attributes to the direct influence of God, and longs for the same sense of security in his present troubles.

womb: thou *art* my God from my mother's belly.

11 Be not far from me; for trouble *is* near; for *there is* † none to help.

† Heb. *not a helper.*

12 Many bulls have compassed me: strong *bulls* of Bashan have beset me round.

13 They † gaped upon me *with* their mouths, *as* a ravening and a roaring lion.

† Heb. *opened their mouths against me.*

14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are ‖ out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.

‖ Or, *sundered.*

15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

16 For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: [d] they pierced my hands and my feet.

[d] Matt. 27. 35. Mark 15. 24. Luke 23. 33. John 19. 23, 37.

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10. *I was cast upon thee*] A remarkable expression, as though the child depended wholly and exclusively on God's love for protection. To the Hebrew all agencies are instrumental; the father's care, the mother's tenderness, are referred to God as their source. The expression corresponds to that rendered "trusted" in *v.* 8; see also lv. 22, where the same word is used.

thou art my God] *i.e.* Thou hast shewn Thyself to be my God, by constant care and love from my birth. Cf. Isai. xlvi. 3. Compare also the description of holy and trustful childhood in Luke ii. 22, 40, 49, 52.

11. *Be not far from me*] This refers to *v.* 1, "far from helping me:" note too the antithesis, Be not far, for trouble is near.

for there is none to help] True in its full sense of Christ, when "all forsook Him and fled," and of Him only. David had most powerful helpers in all his troubles; see Introduction.

12. The characteristics of the enemies, who are the agents of this great affliction, are strength, fierceness, and baseness, represented under the figures of bulls, lions and dogs; to which the Psalmist recurs again, *vv.* 20, 21, where he recapitulates his trials.

Many bulls have compassed me] Dr Tristram ('Nat. Hist. B.' p. 71) observes that "bulls and buffaloes are very numerous in the southern wilderness of Judæa," and adds that "they are in the habit of gathering in a circle round any novel or unaccustomed object, and may be easily instigated into charging with their horns;" a vivid portraiture of the rabble who were instigated to clamour for the death of Jesus. Matt. xxvii. 20.

Bashan] The district of Batanæa, to which the name Bashan was restricted at a later period, is a basaltic table-land to the north of the river Yarmuk, but the term here includes the rich pasture-land of Gilead, which formed part of the ancient kingdom of Bashan, and was famous for the size and beauty of its bulls, and also for their ferocity; frequently taken as symbols of the luxurious and ungodly rulers of Israel. Cf. Deut. xxxii. 14, 15; Ezek. xxxix. 18; Amos iv. 1. The characteristics thus presented are strength, pride, and ungodliness.

13. *They gaped upon me with their mouths*] Or, **they opened their mouths upon me.** The figure changes. As the foes come nearer the Psalmist sees in them lions, with open jaws, roaring as when about to rend their prey. Cf. Matt. xxvii. 23, περισσῶς ἔκραζον.

14. This verse and the two following verses contrast the exhaustion and the powerlessness of the speaker with the ferocity of his enemies. Each word recalls a distinct feature in our Lord's sufferings: "poured out like water," as when He sank fainting, unable to bear the cross (Matt. xxvii. 32), or when He shed His blood upon it; the bones racked, all but dislocated by the strain of the suspended body: the heart melted, so to speak, sending out all its blood in one stream mingled with water—according to physiologists the immediate cause of that death by crucifixion: the strength dried up, the body parched and agonized by thirst, the last and most terrible torment of the crucified, that which alone wrung an expression referring to physical pain from our Saviour, that *this* scripture might be fulfilled, see John xix. 28; the tongue cleaving to the jaws, yet forced, under the control of the mighty will, to utter the seven great words recorded by the evangelists: the body brought to the dust of death, laid, that is, in the grave (see critical Note on Job xix. and here on *v.* 29), though not to see corruption. Such cannot possibly have been the form in which David realized his own sufferings, sufficient though they were to make him a sympathizing exponent of the Spirit, which spoke by him to the Church.

16. *For dogs have compassed me*] The images become more distinct. The speaker sees himself in the death-hour, surrounded by dogs; representing the meaner agents of cruelty. See Matt. xxvi. 67, xxvii. 27—30.

they pierced my hands and my feet] See critical Note. Retaining without any doubt this interpretation, we see the fierce soldiery, the hounds of the chief hunters, in the very act of piercing (*digging*, as the word literally

17 I may tell all my bones: they look *and* stare upon me.

18 [e] They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

19 But be not thou far from me, O LORD: O my strength, haste thee to help me.

20 Deliver my soul from the sword; [†] my darling [†] from the power of the dog.

21 Save me from the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.

22 [f] I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

[e] Luke 23. 34. John 19. 23, 24.

[†] Heb. *my only one.*

[†] Heb. *from the hand.*

[f] Heb. 2. 12.

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means), with rough and ruthless hands, the feet and hands, and nailing them to the cross.

17. *I may tell all my bones*] All the framework of the body, every bone, so to speak, stands out in terrible relief under the strain of crucifixion; the body of the crucified is a living lesson in anatomy. The terms are too strong to be explained by mere physical exhaustion.

they look and stare upon me] Cf. Luke xxiii. 35, where the people gaze on the naked frame of the Man of sorrows hanging before them in its awful beauty and agony. The last words, "stare upon me" (in Hebrew יראו בי), have generally the meaning of looking with complacency or triumph on a foe. It is a phrase common in Davidic psalms, and it occurs twice on the Moabite stone, lines 4 and 7: a point of some importance, considering the connection of David with Moab both by descent and family circumstances; see 1 S. xxii. 3, 4. See Pss. xxvii. 13, xxxvii. 34, liv. 7, lix. 10.

18. *They part*, &c.] The act described in this verse is not applicable either to David, or to any personage whose history is recorded in the Bible, save to Him whose disciple saw and described the fulfilment; see John xix. 24. It could indeed only occur in the case of one who had been stripped as a preliminary to execution.

19. *be not thou far*] Cf. *vv.* 1 and 11.

O my strength] The Hebrew word, which occurs in no other passage, means source or substance of all strength, here with special reference to physical exhaustion. Compare Luke xxii. 43, where the word "strengthening" (ἐνισχύων) refers not to spiritual, but to physical support. Compare also the next verse in St Luke with the supplication "haste thee to help me."

20. *from the sword*] This word, applicable to David in his sore distress, is equally so to our Lord. The "sword" was in fact the special symbol of the authority by which He was condemned to death. See Rom. xiii. 4, where St Paul speaks of the *Roman* magistrate. The prayer for deliverance from death is regarded by some critics as unsuitable to our Saviour; they must be strangely unmindful of His own words "remove this cup from me." Calvin remarks: "Si roget quispiam quomodo hoc Christo aptari possit, quem Pater non eripuit a morte; respondeo uno verbo, fuisse potentius ereptum, quam si periculo occursum foret: quanto scilicet plus est resurgere a morte, quam gravi morbo sanari."

my darling] Lit. "my only one;" but the word "darling" expresses the meaning with singular grace and power. The term is admitted in this and in the corresponding passage Ps. xxxv. 17 to apply to the soul, a usage peculiar to David; but in what precise sense is questioned; probably as the one thing in comparison with which nothing that belongs to man is precious; a statement true of each man's soul, true in the highest sense of that soul which was "poured out unto death" as a ransom for humanity: cf. Isai. liii. 10—12.

the power of the dog] In this and the following verse the figures, under which the persecutors have been represented, are brought together. The power of the dog, lit. "the hand," is a peculiar expression, and points to the agents or executioners; see Note on *v.* 16.

21. *the lion's mouth*] See *v.* 13. The reference is certain, and it supplies an additional argument, were such needed, against the misinterpretation of *v.* 16, discussed in the critical Note.

thou hast heard me] This clause must refer to the last hour, when the fatal blow had been inflicted. When the work of the enemy is completed, and not until then, comes the answer which assures deliverance.

the horns of the unicorns] Or, "the wild bulls." See Dr Tristram's remarks quoted on Job xxxix. 9. He identifies the rēm with the extinct auerochs.

22, 23. The whole strain changes: the clouds are dispersed: from the depth of humiliation, the prostration of strength, the agony of death, the dust of the grave, the speaker passes at once into a state of perfect peace and exultation. Such a transition David may have been able to realize by events in his own life, else had the representation been unreal and cold: but in order to realize it so vividly his spirit must have been raised into a sphere of spiritual life, which gave a new meaning to all that he had experienced. We may also surely infer that this psalm could not have been written in the midst of afflictions so terrible—then the joy would have

23 Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.

24 For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard.

25 My praise *shall be* of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him.

26 The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever.

27 [ε] All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.

28 For the kingdom *is* the LORD'S: and he *is* the governor among the nations.

29 All *they that be* fat upon earth shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him: and none can keep alive his own soul.

30 A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.

31 They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done *this*.

ε Ps. 2. 8. & 72. 11. & 86. 9.

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been premature: nor could it have been written afterwards by David, in his own person, for the sufferings are represented as present, and as terminating in death. Spoken in the Person of Christ all is clear; the transition of feeling corresponds exactly to that described in the last verses of the 53rd and the first part of the 54th chapters of Isaiah, where the joy of God's sacrificed servant is shared by the redeemed people, and sealed by the conversion of the heathen.

22. *I will declare*] See Heb. ii. 12, where these words are expressly assigned to the "Captain of our salvation" made "perfect through sufferings."

my brethren] Cf. Matt. xxviii. 10.

24. Each phrase in this verse finds a distinct echo in Isaiah. See especially liii. 3.

25. *of thee*] Not, as the English phrase implies, "about Thee," but "proceeding from Thee:" the source of praise is in God: His act here supplies the motive, His Spirit the grace, of prayer.

in the great congregation] Ewald points out that the expressions in this clause imply that the sanctuary was in existence in the time of the writer, and that the offerings of sacrifices would be witnessed by crowds of worshippers: see note on *v.* 3.

26. *The meek*] Men of lowly spirit, equivalent to "the poor" in our Lord's discourse on the mount.

shall eat] This may be understood of the sacrificial meat partaken of by friends, and distributed to the poor, on occasions of thanksgiving. The sense is equally good and true in reference to the Antitype, whose sacrificed Body, offered once for all on the Cross, is given as spiritual food to the faithful in the Eucharist. Thus Eusebius quoted by Bp. Wordsworth; see also Stier on Isaiah lv. 2, and note on Song Sol. v. 1.

your heart shall live for ever] For that food preserves body and soul unto everlasting life. The reference to this in John vi. 51 is scarcely questionable.

27. The general conversion of the heathen is described in terms which found their full explanation in our Lord's last commission to His apostles; see Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. The anticipation, however, of a general conversion of the heathen belongs to David's sphere of thought; see note on Ps. xviii. 49, and Introd.

29. *All they that be fat*] The word may, as in other passages, mean "All the mighty on the earth;" but the general purport of this clause would seem to be that none shall truly prosper but those who recognize the God of David as their God by partaking of the gifts which are offered on His altar: the spiritual application is obvious.

go down to the dust] *i.e.* to the grave, see note on *v.* 14.

bow before him] Willingly or unwillingly acknowledging Him as their King.

none can keep] The connection of this clause with the context is questioned, but to quicken a soul means to give or to preserve its true life, and the most obvious and natural meaning is that suggested by our Version: all alike depend upon God: the prosperous must worship if they are to be fed: all mortals must bow before Him, and none can live save by His gift.

30. *A seed*] Not merely the present race, but their posterity: each succeeding generation of worshippers, with special allusion to the grace of regeneration. Cf. Ps. lxxxvii. 6.

31. *that he hath done this*] The expression is emphatic: it declares the complete accomplishment of God's purpose: see Ps. xxxvii. 5, where A.V. has "He shall bring it to pass." Our Saviour's last word τετέλεσται, "it is finished," if not referring directly to this passage, as Hengstenberg argues with great force, certainly supplies a perfect commentary upon it.

NOTE on PSALM XXII. 16.

The extreme importance of this text, both on theological and critical grounds, demands a full investigation into the true reading and meaning of the principal word.

The Hebrew MSS. have כארי, כארו, and כרו. The first of these is the textus receptus of the Masora. It is the only reading found in Jewish editions of the Bible, and it is supported by the Targum. The meaning, according to the punctuation, which varies in the MSS., would be either (1) "as a lion," or (2) "digging," sc. "piercing," or (3) "diggers," "piercers of." The second meaning, "fodientes," is well supported. It assumes כארי, *caari*, to be the plural participle, with apocope of ם: for which good authority can be adduced. This was apparently the old Jewish interpretation of the reading, as is shewn by the Masora parva in loc., which states that כארי with *kametz* occurs twice with two different meanings: now in Isai. xxxviii. 13, the other passage to which the Masora refers, the sense is certain, "as a lion:" here therefore the Masorites must have taken it to mean "fodientes." See De Rossi, 'Var. Lect.' IV. p. 17. The third meaning differs but slightly —it takes the punctuation with *tsere*, sc. כארֵי, for which the authority of some MSS. is adduced by De Rossi, l. c. p. 16. It appears also that the Targumist took the word to be a participle. In the Antwerp Polyglott the reading is נכתין אידי ורגלי, "biting my hands and my feet." In Walton's 'Polyglott' and in the 'Bibl. Mag. Rabbin.' the words היך כאריא, "as a lion," are inserted, probably, as Pococke ('Notæ Misc. in Portam Mosis,' p. 152) suggests, sono verbi vicino id ipsi suggerente. The interpretation (1) "as a lion" presents insuperable difficulties: and even this sense, faulty as it is, is only obtained by inserting a participle, "watching" or "biting," for which no authority can be adduced. The lion cannot be said to *surround* his prey, or to watch its hands and feet, or to bite them. The figure is incongruous. Thus Ewald, p. 271, "aber weder passt das Bild von Umgeben, noch gehört das Bild vom Löwen überhaupt hieher." In fact the figure of the lion has been already used in its proper place, *v.* 13.

If therefore the Masoretic reading be retained, its most natural interpretation "fodientes" would give the same sense, though with a somewhat harsh construction, as that adopted in our A.V.

The second reading, כארו, *caaru* "they dug or pierced," has in its favour the unanimous consent of all the other ancient Versions. Among these, special importance attaches to the LXX. as a translation without any possible bias, representing the old, pre-Christian tradition of the Jews. They render it ὤρυξαν; and are followed by the Vulg. "foderunt;" the Arabic ثقبوا, an important witness to the sense, not merely "perruperunt," as Walton renders it, but "perforaverunt;" see Freytag, 'Lex. Ar.' s. v. Thus too the Syro-Hex. (quoted by Field, 'Hex.') renders the LXX. by a word which corresponds to ἔτρησαν, ἔτρωσαν, or ἔῤῥηξαν. With this agree the Æth. and Copt. The Syriac, an independent authority, has ܚܦܪ, foderunt[1]. The evidence of Aquila is conclusive as to the text received by the Jews in the early Christian period. He gives ᾔσχυναν (a meaning derived, according to Pococke, p. 149, l. c., from the Syr. ܟܦ, pudefecit), or, as Field shews, ἐπέδησαν, or συνεπόδισαν: hence Jerome "vinxerunt." In either case it is clear that Aquila had a finite verb. It is evident that since one special object with Aquila was to oppose Christians, he would have adopted the reading with ', and the meaning "as a lion," had they been known in his time.

With regard to the Masoretic text, it must be observed that the Jews have suppressed with the greatest care all readings which do not agree with it. De Rossi observes (in the 'Dissertatio præliminaris,' Tom. IV. p. 4), "turning over the MSS. we observe, not without wonder and indignation, that there is scarcely a manuscript, scarcely a sheet of a manuscript, scarcely a reading differing, however slightly, from the Masora, which a Jewish scribe has not effaced, corrected, or changed, to bring it into accord with its directions. The Masoretic text as edited by Jacob ben Chaiim (Venice, 1526) has been followed both in Jewish and Christian editions without regard to ancient authorities, MSS., quotations, or versions, which undoubtedly preserve or indicate different, and, in many cases, preferable readings."

When therefore there are a few MSS. which differ from the Masora, their value is exceedingly enhanced; especially when they are supported by early versions and editions. De Rossi writes thus: "כארו, foderunt. Kenn. 39, forte 207, nunc 242, meus 337, ad marg. 218, Biblia Complut. Psalt. Bas. 1516." The Masora maj. on Num. xxiv. 9 states that in Psalm xxii. the Cthib, that is the MSS. reading, was כארו. Of special weight is the testimony of Jacob ben Chaiim himself, who says: "In some *most accurate* books I have found it written (the Cthib) כארו, and read (Kri) כארי." To this it may be added that some MSS. have כרו; a reading which Kimchi and other Jews attribute to Christians. It is, however, in all

[1] Dean Payne Smith observes that in Asseman's 'Acta Martyrum Orient.' I. 104 ܟܦ occurs for boring a martyr's feet through with an auger.

probability a conjectural emendation, substituting a common form for the *d.λ.* כאר. In some MSS. the ו has *shurek* וּ, evidently pointing to the reading כארו. It must be observed that the corruption of ו into י is one of the commonest errors of transcription (see Hitzig's remark quoted in critical Note on Ps. xxxvi. 1), and for the most part evidently without any intention to alter the sense. The mutual accusations of Christian and Jewish controversialists ought to be altogether abandoned. The early Masorites who read ו, and the Christians who preferred כרו, gave the same general interpretation.

On the whole the arguments in favour of כארו considered apart from the translation, and simply on critical grounds, appear to preponderate; if, however, כארי be retained, Pococke's view that it is merely a defective form equivalent to כארים is strongly supported. It is accepted by Reinke, Bohl, Moll, Phillips; and it is admitted to be grammatically unobjectionable by Winer, De Wette, and Gesen. 'Lehrg.' p. 526.

That כאר, כור and כרה are simply variants of one word may be assumed; and the meaning "dig" is tolerably certain. In the third form it is applied to digging a well, a tomb, and a pit; and in one passage (Ps. xl. 6, where see note), to digging, or piercing the ears. In Arabic كار = effodit; thus too كرا, fodit terram: see Freytag, s.v. Dig and pierce are equivalents in Greek, Latin, and other languages; and with reference to this passage, the statement of Gesenius, 'Th.' p. 671, "fodiendi verbum vulnerandi sensu aptissime telis hostilibus tribuitur," is equally, or even more applicable to nails driven into the hands and feet.

PSALM XXIII.

David's confidence in God's grace.

A Psalm of David.

[a] Is. 40. 11. Jer. 23. 4. Ezek. 34. 11, 12, 23. John 10. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 25.

THE LORD *is* [a] my shepherd; I shall not want.

2 He maketh me to lie down in † green pastures: he leadeth me beside the † still waters.

† Heb. *pastures of tender grass.*

3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

† Heb. *waters of quietness.*

PSALM XXIII.

The freshness and simple solemnity of this psalm suggest to some that it was written by David in his early years of innocence. But see *v.* 5, and note. The experience of the Psalmist, also, is unlike that of any youth. The simple faith and realization of God's presence evidenced in the psalm recall 1 S. xvii. 37. Common opinion agrees with the inscription, and assigns the psalm to David; and the ascription to him is confirmed by the contents, the imagery, *vv.* 1, 2, &c., and by the occurrence of phrases characteristic of the Davidic psalms. These are mentioned as they occur.

No Christian hymn meets the wants of Christians in trial more completely than this strain of David, which scarcely needs the light of Christianity to disclose its full import, but shines, so to say, as a fixed star, by its own light: *vv.* 2, 3 describe as aptly as words can describe the peace of a Christian resting in Christ; *v.* 4, the fearlessness of a Christian in the literal valley of death-shade; *v.* 6, the perpetual dwelling of the redeemed with God. One supposition only accounts for such pointed and easy application: *i.e.* that the same divine Spirit dictated this ancient psalm and the gospel of Christ.

1. *my shepherd*] A common image in Scripture; Gen. xlviii. 15, xlix. 24; Ps. lxxx. 1; Isai. xl. 11; Jer. xxxi. 10; Ezek. xxxiv. 23. Christ, in the New Testament, applies these texts in some sort to Himself, John x. 27, 28. The force of the similitude can only be understood if we consider the deep solitudes in which the Eastern shepherds fed their flocks; the perpetual danger from sudden torrents, and from wolves and robbers; the parching thirst; the scanty streams; and the safety of the sheep depending upon the vigilance of their guardian. All such trials and dangers were known to David, 1 S. xvii. 34; also to Jacob and Moses, who speak in the places first quoted.

I shall not want] See Deut. ii. 7, viii. 9. The expression in the psalm is shorter and more absolute; its full import is, "I shall not, or cannot, want anything." The Prayer-book version, "therefore can I lack nothing," expresses this meaning.

2. *still waters*] Marg., waters of quietness: Prayer-book version, "waters of comfort." The waters of Shiloah, "that go softly" (Isai. viii. 6), are not parallel. The image exhibited is not that of the "stillness of waters," but rather of the "stillness of the flock," which, after restless motion, drinks peacefully at the long-sought stream. The original word used for *pastures* (see Note) occurs elsewhere (in the Pss.) only in lxv. 12, in this sense. The substantive rendered *green* occurs in the Pss. only here and in xxxvii. 2. Both these psalms are reputed David's.

3. *restoreth*] That is, "refreshes" and "quickens" by His Spirit, after intercourse with the world, as fresh pasture and sweet

4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, [b] I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou [†] anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD [†] for ever.

[b] Ps. 3. 6. & 118. 6.

[†] Heb. *makest fat.*

[†] Heb. *to length of days.*

waters recruit the wandering sheep: see Ps. xix. 7, marg. The original word in the form here used is of rare occurrence. Elsewhere in the Pss. it occurs only Ps. lx. 1.

the paths of righteousness, &c.] That is, "the paths of security and peace;" see Ps. xvii. 5. See also Ps. cvii. 7; Prov. iv. 11; in which the "right path," or "path of righteousness," means the "straight, secure path," as opposed to the "devious, dangerous path of crime." Note, the images in *vv.* 1, 2, 4, 5, are physical; the spiritual image lies behind. In the *v.* before us the physical image is in some sort abandoned, and the conversion of the soul to God, and His guidance in the paths of holiness, are all but expressed. See Pss. lxv. 5, cxxxii. 9.

for his name's sake] See Pss. xxv. 11, xxxi. 3, lxxix. 9, &c. "Not on account of any deserts of mine, but on account of His great name and fame as a merciful and gracious God." Ex. xxxiv. 5; Pss. v. 11, vi. 4.

4. *Yea, though I walk*, &c.] The image is partially changed; it is no longer that of *sheep* guarded by a shepherd; it is rather that of a wanderer in the midst of a valley, dark as the shadow of death. In the midst of this darkness and horror, like that of a horrible pit (Job xxviii. 3), or of a dark, deep, sunless ravine between mountains (Jer. xiii. 16), or of a wild, uninhabited, desolate, wilderness (Jer. ii. 6), or rather, of the grave (Job x. 21), the wanderer *is without fear*, guided and supported by the rod and staff of his protecting Shepherd. The second of the words, "rod and staff," seems merely explanatory of the first; the rod of the shepherd (Micah vii. 14) is a staff supporting the wanderer's steps. In Zech. xi. 7, the shepherd has two staves: one to lead the flock, and the other to defend it. So the protecting shepherd here may possibly be described. The original word (staff) employed seems a favourite expression of David, 2 S. xxii. 19; Ps. xviii. 18 (Heb.). De Wette quotes Morier's second journey to Persia, p. 179, as illustrative of the image of this verse: "Near Ispahan is a valley, inconceivably dreary, desolate, waterless, called the Valley of the Angel of Death."

5. *Thou preparest a table*, &c.] Still a new image. Jehovah is David's princely entertainer and host. "A table (Prov. ix. 2; Isai. xxi. 5) is spread for him in full security; his foes look on and are helpless; his head is anointed with oil (Ps. xlv. 7; Eccles. ix. 8; Luke vii. 46), so that nothing may be needed for joy and cheerfulness: his cup (Pss. xi. 6, xvi. 5) is full and runs over." The words, "*in the presence of mine enemies*," &c., suggest some special occasion or some recollection of the past which here breaks forth. They are illustrated (as Perowne remarks) by the circumstances mentioned 2 S. xvii. 27—29, when David and his companions, in their faintness and weariness, were refreshed and entertained through Barzillai's kindness.

6. *goodness and mercy*] *unalloyed*, like good angels sent of God, track my footsteps, and *pursue* me whithersoever I go; and I dwell in the house of Jehovah "to length of days" (marg.). The image in *v.* 5 of Jehovah a princely entertainer is continued. A similar image occurs Pss. xxvii. 4 and xxxvi. 8. David is a guest (Ps. xv. 1) in the house of "his friend and protector," filled to abundance with His gifts *for ever*. See Ps. xxi. 4. The original word (see Note) rendered "I will dwell" is of doubtful import; there seems, however, no sufficient ground for altering, except as above, the received rendering.

The force of this psalm is impaired in the Prayer-book version by the substitution throughout of the future tense for the present. "He shall feed. He shall convert. I will fear," &c.

NOTES on PSALM XXIII. 2, 6.

2. נאות is often (says Kay, Ps. lxv. 12; Jer. ix. 10, xxiii. 10, &c.) coupled with "wilderness," and seems to mean a spot in which a dwelling or homestead could be placed in a barren land. The original import is "dwelling."

6. שַׁבְתִּי, according to present punctuation, is the pret. of שׁוּב. Perhaps it is better to alter the punctuation (שְׁבָתִי), and thus regard it as inf. with suff. from יָשַׁב. See Ps. xxi. 4, Hebr. Del. renders "I return, *and dwell* in the house, &c.;" constructio prægnans; the words in italics being understood.

PSALM XXIV.

1 *God's lordship in the world.* 3 *The citizens of his spiritual kingdom.* 7 *An exhortation to receive him.*

A Psalm of David.

[a] Deut. 10. 14. Job 41. 11. Ps. 50. 12. 1 Cor. 10. 26, 28.
[b] Job 38. 6. Ps. 104. 5. & 136. 6.

THE [a] earth *is* the LORD's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

2 [b] For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.

[c] Ps. 15. 1

3 [c] Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?

[d] Isai. 33. 15, 16.
[†] Heb. *The clean of hands.*

4 [d †] He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

5 He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

PSALM XXIV.

This psalm carries on the strain of feeling with which the twenty-third concludes: that expresses the longing to dwell in God's house, this describes the characteristics of those who are admitted into it. It consists of two parts, of which the second undoubtedly belongs to an occasion when the ark, the symbol and pledge of the Lord's Presence, was brought into the sanctuary The old Hebrew interpreters generally held that it was composed by David, when admonished by the prophet Gad to choose a place for the building, with a view to its recitation when the work should be completed. The words however seem to indicate a present event rather than the vivid realization of a future one. On the whole it seems far more probable that David wrote this and the 15th psalm to be recited when the ark was brought from the house of Obed-edom, and placed upon Mount Zion, 2 S. vi. 12. This was an event of the greatest importance in the national history. The possession of the land was sealed by the capture of Zion; the king of their own deliberate choice reigned over the people, and, after a long series of triumphs, established the ark, the symbol and pledge of the Divine Presence, in the citadel of their capital. The adaptation to liturgical use is obvious; it was evidently intended to be recited in alternate parts, probably by the High-priest and a choir of Levites. According to the inscription in the Septuagint, confirmed by Talmudic tradition, it was chanted in the Temple on the first day of the week: a remarkable fact, considering its typical application to the resurrection or ascension of our Lord.

The division is marked by Selah, *v.* 6. The first portion is subdivided into three strophes: the second has two strophes, each of three full verses.

1. The declaration of the universal sovereignty of the Lord has a manifest bearing upon the circumstances of the psalm, since it shews at once the majesty of Him who was about to be enthroned in Zion, and His condescension in taking up His abode among men.

2. *For he*] The Hebrew is emphatic, "for it is He who hath founded it."

upon the seas] Or, **over the seas**, alluding to the rising of the dry land over the waters described in Genesis i. The Psalmist does not of course refer to geological speculations, but describes natural phenomena, the earth raised above the seas, girt by the ocean, and resting apparently upon its waters. The contrast between its stability and the apparent insecurity of such a foundation served but to deepen his apprehension of the Almightiness of the Creator.

3. *the hill of the* LORD] The hill where His sanctuary is placed, whether Mount Zion, or, after the building of the temple, Mount Moriah: but in either case as typical of His eternal abode in heaven.

4. *He that hath*, &c.] David selects four cardinal points of character, two internal, two external, each having its correlative: cleanness of hands combined with purity of heart; freedom from vain desires with observance of oaths. Of the two internal principles the one, purity of heart, includes all godliness (see the marginal reference); the other involves the subjugation of the principle of all ungodliness: to lift up the soul unto vanity means to fix the desires upon what is wrong, false, worthless, to be filled with inordinate desire; it includes all that is comprehended under the scriptural term "lust," the lust of the eye, the flesh, and the pride of life. Cleanness of hands, that is, perfect honesty in dealings between man and man, and observance of oaths, were matters of especial importance to the king, and directly connected with the sacredness of the house of God.

5. *the blessing*] Or, "blessing;" the article is unnecessary. Dr Kay compares Gen. xxxii. 29 and xxxv. 9.

righteousness] To receive righteousness is to have the gift of righteousness, grace to resemble God in His essential attributes, and conformity to the divine will and the divine nature. It also includes the substantial fact of justification, for such a man has righteousness imputed to him. It is a phrase of great importance in its bearings upon the doctrinal teaching of the psalms. The man who brings the conditions of acceptance, honesty of heart

6 This *is* the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, ‖ O Jacob. Selah.

‖ Or, O God of *Jacob.*

7 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

8 Who *is* this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.

9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift *them* up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

10 Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he *is* the King of glory. Selah.

PSALM XXV.

1 *David's confidence in prayer.* 7 *He prayeth for remission of sins,* 16 *and for help in affliction.*

A Psalm of David.

UNTO thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul.

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and uprightness in dealings, will receive grace for grace.

6. *This is the generation*] The word "this" is emphatic, such is the true character, &c.

O Jacob] The exact connection of this word with the sentence is questioned. The A.V. follows the generality of the Greek versions (Aq., see Field's 'Hex.'). The marginal rendering, which is supported by some of the ablest commentators, supposes either an ellipsis of the word "God," or a various reading supplying it, of which there are indications both in some ancient Versions (LXX., Vulg. and Syr.,) and in two MSS. Jacob may however be taken in apposition to generation, in which case the meaning would be, "this is the generation of them that seek Thee, this is the true Jacob, these the true inheritors of the blessings, Israelites not only in name, but in spirit." Bishop Wordsworth refers to the narrative of Genesis where Jacob is described as seeing "God face to face," and naming the place Peniel: ch. xxxii. 30. For the use of the word "generation" cf. Ps. xiv. 5, xxii. 30.

7. This verse is evidently sung by the choir of Levites, bearing and accompanying the ark as it is brought to the gates of the sanctuary, or of the citadel of Zion. The epithet "everlasting doors" presents some difficulty: it is referred by some to the antiquity of the fortress captured from the Jebusites (see Stanley, 'S. and P.' p. 173), a very unsatisfactory explanation; or it may describe the hopes or convictions of the writer, who regarded the Presence of Jehovah, signified and assured by the ark, as a pledge of permanence: but it is more probable that the eternal gates of heaven, represented by the gates through which the ark was passing, were in the mind of the Psalmist. The reference to the Ascension of our Lord is recognized by all the Fathers, and by our Church, which appoints this psalm to be read at that great festival.

8. The answer apparently implies that this entrance of the Lord into the tabernacle took place after a conquest achieved by His interposition. It belongs therefore to the reign of David rather than to that of Solomon. "Strong" and "mighty" are not mere synonyms; the former denotes an essential attribute, the second its manifestation by acts; it is used of Christ, "The mighty God," Isai. ix. 6.

10. *The LORD of hosts*] The word "hosts" means "armies;" but the armies of the Almighty are not merely those of warriors fulfilling His will, and dependent upon His favour for victory, but include angels and the heavenly bodies, all the agencies of the visible and invisible universe. The epithet is constantly used in the books of Kings, doubtless with reference both to the assurance of power and victory which it involved, and to the subordination of all objects of idolatrous nature-worship to the one omnipotent will. See Ew. 'Gesch.,' p. 81, note.

PSALM XXV.

This psalm consists of prayers and pious ejaculations, not arranged in systematic order, and apparently not referring to any special events in the Psalmist's life. The great beauty of the language, the fervency and depth of feeling, and a certain loftiness of thought, combined with an intense sense of sin, see *vv.* 7, 11, 18 (points fully recognized by Ewald, pp. 313 and 309), confirm the inscription which assigns it to David, by whom it may have been written at a period of distress and spiritual suffering at the latter part of his life; see the last verse, which, though doubtless appropriate to the time of the Babylonish exile, would be a fit expression of the king's feelings when Israel was smitten by the most terrible pestilence recorded in its annals, 2 S. xxiv. The only serious objection to this view rests upon the fact that the psalm is one of nine alphabetic psalms, each verse in the Hebrew beginning with a letter of the alphabet, with some exceptions (see critical Note) in regular succession. On this account chiefly Ewald and others, including Perowne, assign to it a late date, perhaps that of the exile, to which,

[a] Ps. 22. 5. & 31. 1. & 34. 8. Isai. 28. 16. Rom. 10. 11.

2 O my God, I [a]trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me.

3 Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause.

[b] Ps. 27. 11. & 86. 11. & 119.

4 [b]Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths.

5 Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou *art* the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.

[c] Ps. 103. 17. & 106. 1. & 107. 1. Jer. 33. 11.

6 Remember, O LORD, [c]† thy tender mercies and thy lovingkindnesses; for they *have been* ever of old.

† Heb. *thy bowels.*

7 Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O LORD.

8 Good and upright *is* the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way.

9 The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.

10 All the paths of the LORD *are* mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.

11 For thy name's sake, O LORD, pardon mine iniquity; for it *is* great.

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however, some expressions are singularly unsuitable; see *v.* 13. But we know too little of the laws of Hebrew poetry to ascertain the force of this objection; Köster, a good authority on such points, attaches no weight to it: the object of the arrangement was certainly not to display ingenuity, but to help the memory; a point of practical importance whether the psalm was intended for public recitation or for private devotion. The same observations apply to Ps. xxxiv., to which this bears a near resemblance both in tone of thought and beauty of expression, as also in some peculiarities not easily accounted for, both omitting one letter (vav), both too repeating the letter ph, and the word *pedah*, sc. redeem, at the close.

1. *do I lift up my soul*] There may possibly be a reference to the expression "lifted up his soul unto vanity," Ps. xxiv. 4. The fundamental distinction between the godly and ungodly men consists in the object to which their affections are directed; such is the exact meaning of the expression; see Deut. xxiv. 15, marg.; Ps. lxxxvi. 4, cxliii. 8.

2. *I trust...ashamed*] Cf. Ps. xxxi. 1, 17; Isai. xlix. 23: the expression is specially used of disappointed expectations; see Job vi. 20.

let not mine enemies] So Ps. xiii. 4, a feeling common enough, but peculiarly strong in David; cf. 2 S. xxiv. 14. A writer in the time of the Babylonish exile would rather have prayed that the enemies should cease to triumph over him.

3. *wait on thee*] See xxvii. 14; Isai. xxvi. 8, xlix. 23.

transgress] The Hebrew has the special sense of treachery, when men break their covenant, whether in reference to their king, their friend (Job vi. 15), their church (Ps. lxxiii. 15), or their God (Hosea v. 7, vi. 7). Compare also Isai. xxiv. 16. The LXX. ἀνομοῦντες; but Aq., Sym., Theod., more correctly ἀποστατοῦντες.

without cause] Thus Ps. lix. 3, 4. There is a bitter irony in the expression, as though traitors and apostates sought for pretexts, but could find none.

5. *in thy truth*] This denotes more than "lead me to the knowledge of God's truth;" His faithfulness and grace is, so to speak, the atmosphere in which the believer moves, the light which surrounds him and directs his steps.

7. *sins*] There is a deep consciousness of sin in this verse; two kinds of sins are indicated, sins of youthful passion and frailty, and sins of wilful transgression, such as belong to maturer age. The Psalmist feels himself liable to punishment for both; this confession goes therefore further than that of Job xiii. 26; hence the fervour of the appeal in this and the preceding verse to the tender mercies, lovingkindnesses and goodness of the LORD.

transgressions] It is to be observed that the Psalmist in this and in the eleventh and eighteenth verses uses the three words, sin, transgression, iniquity, which David employs repeatedly and in combination, when he is deploring his own great sin: cf. Ps. xxxii. 5, xxxviii. 3, 4, 18, li. 1, 2, 9.

8. *sinners*] Not the ungodly who rebel against God, see note on Ps. i. 1, but those who err from infirmity, or natural sinfulness—labes humana; see li. 5.

9. *The meek will he guide in judgment*] The one condition on which sinners (see *v.* 8) can build any hope is "poverty of spirit," *i.e.* the sense of weakness, helplessness, and contrition.

10. *testimonies*] The laws which testify His will, and appeal to the conscience of man. See note on Ps. xix. 7.

11. *For thy name's sake*] All appeals for mercy rest upon faith in the attributes which are involved in the Name Jehovah: see Exod.

12 What man *is* he that feareth the LORD? him shall he teach in the way *that* he shall choose.

13 His soul †shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth.

14 [d] The secret of the LORD *is* with them that fear him; ‖and he will shew them his covenant.

15 Mine eyes *are* ever toward the LORD; for he shall †pluck my feet out of the net.

16 Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I *am* desolate and afflicted.

17 The troubles of my heart are enlarged: *O* bring thou me out of my distresses.

18 Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins.

19 Consider mine enemies; for they are many; and they hate me with †cruel hatred.

20 O keep my soul, and deliver me: let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee.

21 Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee.

22 Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.

† Heb. *shall lodge in goodness.*
[d] Prov. 3. 32.
‖ Or, *and his covenant to make them know it.*
† Heb. *bring forth.*
† Heb. *hatred of violence.*

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xxxiv. 5—7. The greatness of the sin presses upon the heart in proportion to its sensitiveness, and its knowledge of that Name.

13. *shall dwell at ease*] Or, **abide in goodness**, *i.e.* in prosperity spiritual and temporal. "His soul" means the man in his own person, as distinct from his seed or posterity. The word "abide," literally "lodge," indicates that the abode here after all is but a sojourning, our earthly home but a caravanserai.

14. *The secret*] The word signifies close personal intercourse, inner communion; the Lord not only counsels and instructs those who fear Him, but abides with them as their friend. See Job xxix. 4, and compare Amos iii. 7. Hupfeld in a critical note shews that it is probably derived from an Arabic root, which occurs also in Syriac, meaning "secret and confidential converse." Aq. has ἀπόῤῥητον, Sym. ὁμιλία.

and he will shew] Or, **and His covenant to instruct them.** Dr Kay has "so as to make them know it," *i.e.* so as to reveal its deep inner meaning to them.

17. *are enlarged*] This is probably the true meaning, though the translation is contested. See Note below.

18. *Look upon*] See note on 2 S. xvi. 12.

19. *cruel hatred*] Or, "hatred of violence," as in the margin, *i.e.* hatred proceeding altogether from malignity, without justification in any act of its object: see note on *v.* 3.

21. *Let integrity and uprightness*] The Psalmist prays that, notwithstanding the sins and transgressions which he deplores (see *v.* 7), he may henceforth be preserved by the favour of God, shewn in the communication of moral and spiritual graces, and secured by faithful waiting. Such a hope is inseparable from the consciousness of absolute dependence upon God.

for I wait on thee] See *v.* 3.

22. This last verse in the original does not follow the alphabetical order, and it may possibly be a pious ejaculation added during the captivity. The point is however doubtful. There is another example of the irregularity, Ps. xxxiv. 22, and the prayer is one which at any age might have been offered by a pious Israelite, and, if by any, certainly by David, especially after the calamities of his later years.

NOTES on PSALM XXV. 2, 17.

2. The deviations from alphabetic order may perhaps be accounted for in part by slight inaccuracies of the transcribers: thus in *v.* 2, "my God" may be placed after "I trust in thee," which gives בְּךָ as the first word. The omission of the letter ו is possibly owing to the misplacement of two clauses, the third clause in *v.* 5, and the third also in *v.* 7, both of which disturb the parallelism: the verse may have begun with ולמדני. The repetition of ראה in the 18th and 19th verses was probably owing to a very common and natural error of transcription, the writer's eye being caught by the beginning of the second clause. It is not so easy to supply a word beginning with a ק in *v.* 18. In the corresponding verse, Ps. xxxiv. 18, we have the word קרב, which may suggest קִרְבָה אֵל, "draw nigh unto," as in Ps. lxix. 18 (Heb. 19): see also Lam. iii. 57. On the last verse see footnote. Köster, however, holds that such deviations undoubtedly proceed from the author himself, who used the alphabetic order as a means, without subjecting himself to it. 'Einleitung,' p. xxiii.: cf. Introd., Appendix.

17. The question is whether הרחיבו can be taken intransitively. This is denied by Hupfeld and others; but Delitzsch shews that as האליף and האריך mean "increase" and "endure," so this word may also mean "enlarge themselves:" and this seems preferable to altering the text, as those critics propose.

PSALM XXVI.

David resorteth unto God in confidence of his integrity.

A Psalm of David.

JUDGE me, O LORD; for I have walked in mine integrity: I have trusted also in the LORD; *therefore* I shall not slide.

[a] Ps. 7. 9. 2 [a] Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.

3 For thy lovingkindness *is* before mine eyes: and I have walked in thy truth.

[b] Ps. 1. 1. 4 [b] I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers.

5 I have hated the congregation of evil doers; and will not sit with the wicked.

6 I will wash mine hands in innocency: so will I compass thine altar, O LORD:

7 That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works.

[†] Heb. *of the tabernacle of thy honour.* 8 LORD, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place [†] where thine honour dwelleth.

PSALM XXVI.

There are points of contact between this and the two preceding psalms: the phraseology is similar, in some passages identical (see notes on *vv.* 1, 3), and the train of thought would seem to be suggested by the conditions of acceptance set forth in the twenty-fourth psalm. The tone of feeling, the illustrations (2, 6, 12), and the style, are those of David; but the absence of all reference to the consciousness of sin, which haunted him after his great fall, indicates an earlier date than that assigned to the twenty-fifth psalm. It may belong to the same date as the fifteenth and the twenty-fourth, and have been written shortly after the ark was brought from the house of Obed-edom. Some critics assign it to the period of Saul's persecution, but the mention of the tabernacle and the altar (6, 8) can scarcely be reconciled with a time when David was unable to approach them: others prefer the period of Absalom's revolt, which seems incompatible with the earnest protestations of freedom from the very sins which then cast their dark shadow on David's heart. Hitzig draws from this an argument (which falls of course with the assumed date) against the Davidic authorship, and on very slight grounds attributes the psalm to Jeremiah. The grace and dignity of the style are recognized by Ewald, who holds that the psalm was composed in a time of national visitation by pestilence.

It consists of one introductory verse, three strophes each of three verses, and one of two verses, forming a triumphant close.

1. *in mine integrity*] Bp. Wordsworth notes the reference to *v.* 21 of the preceding psalm. Sincerity here best expresses the meaning of the word, which is used of single-hearted men: see note on Job i. 1.

I have trusted] See xxv. 2.

slide] To slip, as in Ps. xviii. 36. David is willing to be judged for the past because he is conscious of integrity, but his confidence that in future he shall be preserved from *vacillation* (the exact meaning of the Hebrew word) is grounded on his stedfast trust in the Lord.

2. Two words in this verse, "examine" and "try," are used specially of the process of refining precious metals, a metaphor of frequent occurrence. See Pss. xii. 6, xvii. 3. The word rendered "prove" is the same as "tempt" in the sense of testing. David wishes his inmost thoughts and tendencies to be thoroughly scrutinized: the process may be painful, the refiner's fire must scorch, but he has no fear for the result.

3. *walked in thy truth*] See notes on Pss. i. 1, xxv. 5. The word "walked" in Hebrew is emphatic, implying long and active habits of obedience.

4. *vain persons*] Or, "men of vanity." The same word is used in Ps. xxiv. 4.

dissemblers] Literally, "hidden ones." Our translation gives the true meaning.

6. *wash mine hands*] As the priests were commanded to do before they *approached the altar;* Exod. xxx. 17—21. See also Deut. xxi. 6, and Matt. xxvii. 24, which shews how generally this symbol of guiltlessness was adopted. Cf. Ps. xxiv. 4.

compass] Some commentators suppose that David speaks of a solemn procession round the altar; but there is no allusion to such a custom in the law, and the word "compass" probably means near and habitual approach; Hupfeld.

7. *That I may publish*] This may imply that David recited psalms of thanksgiving while the sacrifice was being offered. Both this and the preceding verse may either refer to sacrifices offered by his command, and to psalms dictated by him to the choirs of Levites, or they may be understood in a spiritual sense. The former is the more natural and obvious interpretation.

8. *the habitation*] Or, "refuge;" the house of God is represented as the true home or

9 [1]Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with [†]bloody men:
10 In whose hands *is* mischief, and their right hand is [†]full of bribes.
11 But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity: redeem me, and be merciful unto me.
12 My foot standeth in an even place: in the congregations will I bless the LORD.

[1] Or, *Take not away.* [†] Heb. *men of blood.* [†] Heb. *filled with.*

PSALM XXVII.

1 *David sustaineth his faith by the power of God,* 4 *by his love to the service of God,* 9 *by prayer.*

A Psalm of David.

THE LORD *is* [a]my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? [a] Micah 7. 8.

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asylum of the believer, where he finds refuge and protection. The word, however, may simply denote "habitation," God's dwelling-place. For the feeling, cf. Pss. xxiii. 6, xxvii. 4, lxiii. 2.

the place] This version gives the true meaning, but the original words are precise and formal; the place where the glory of God is enshrined means the mercy-seat, where the Lord manifested His Presence.

9. *Gather not*] The two meanings "gather" and "take away" are combined in the original word. David prays not to be numbered with the transgressors, or to share their fate. See Matt. xiii. 30. Compare Æschylus, 'Seven against Thebes,' 597—613, and Horace, 'Od.' III. 2. 30.

bloody men] See note on Ps. v. 6.

10. *mischief*] Or, "crafty device," conceived in the heart, but executed by the hand; the expression denotes the promptitude with which the evil purpose is carried into effect.

full of bribes] This points at the magistracy, or high officers of state; the corruption of justice was then, and ever has been, the cancer of Oriental despotisms. The words are those of a king: cf. xv. 5.

11. *integrity*] refers to *v.* 1.

redeem me] Here specially, deliver me from the evils which will overwhelm the guilty.

12. *in an even place*] Or, **on level ground**: where one can advance without obstruction or danger of falling. See xxvii. 11. There may be a reference to "equity," another meaning of the Hebrew word. David, however, is speaking not of his own uprightness, but of the security from danger which the Lord vouchsafes to him as a faithful servant.

in the congregations] David ever connects his feelings of thankfulness for deliverance and support with the duty of proclaiming God's goodness to His people; cf. xviii. 49, xxii. 25, lxviii. 26. See also Pss. xxxii. 11, xxxv. 18, xl. 10.

PSALM XXVII.

This psalm expresses unshaken confidence in the midst of urgent dangers. The enemies of the Psalmist have been foiled (*v.* 2), but they still threaten him; the recurrence of an attack is imminent (*v.* 3); he is closely watched (*v.* 6); he prays earnestly, not without a consciousness that he has incurred God's anger (*v.* 9), but with a certainty that his prayer is heard, that he will be delivered, pass the rest of his life near the sanctuary, and offer sacrifices of thanksgiving in God's tabernacle (*v.* 6). The indications, if not conclusive, yet point naturally to the time when David was pursued by the army of Absalom, probably to the time when the last and decisive battle was about to be fought. Ewald, who, while recognizing the similarity of the style to David's, assigns this and the twenty-third psalm to some unknown author, holds that the Psalmist must have been a warrior, carrying on a desperate struggle on the frontiers of Palestine; and admits that these notices are specially applicable to the circumstances of David's exile. The internal evidences of Davidic authorship are strong, as may be seen by examination of the marginal references to other psalms (especially to the third), which are admitted by Ewald and Hitzig to be productions of David. Hitzig, disregarding the plain indications of warfare, attributes the psalm to Jeremiah, but recognizes its connection with that which precedes it; a point of importance in reference to Ewald's assumption. The whole psalm gives lively expression to the feelings which have ever characterized the heroes of God.

The rhythmical arrangement of this psalm is striking and somewhat peculiar, resembling very nearly the latter part of the nineteenth psalm, especially in the subdivision, or double-beat of the clauses, expressing with singular force the rapid alternations of thoughts and feelings. The division at end of *v.* 6 is distinctly marked.

1. *my light*] This is the first, and, in the Old Testament, the only passage in which the term "light" is expressly applied to the LORD; although expressions full of the same beautiful thought occur in Isaiah (see ch. lx. 1, 20) and Micah vii. 8. In the New Testament we read "God is light," 1 John i. 5; Christ "the true light," John i. 7—9; and the Lamb the light of the Church, Rev. xxi. 23.

my salvation] Cf. Exod. xv. 2; a hymn ever in the mind of David. See also Isai. lxii. 11, which shews that in this passage "my salvation" is equivalent to "my Saviour."

[a] Ps. 118. 6. [b] the LORD *is* the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

2 When the wicked, *even* mine enemies and my foes, [†] came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.

[†] Heb. *approached against me.*

[c] Ps. 3. 6. 3 [c] Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this *will* I *be* confident.

4 One *thing* have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold [‡] the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple.

[‡] Or, *the delight.*

5 For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.

6 And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices [†] of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD.

[†] Heb. *of shouting.*

7 Hear, O LORD, *when* I cry with

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strength of my life] Or, "stronghold of my life," in which my life is preserved; or, it may be, "my living stronghold." The expression, peculiarly suitable to David, does not occur elsewhere, but stands in close connection of thought with Ps. xviii. 1. See also Ps. cxviii. 14.

2. *came upon me to eat up my flesh*] The words "came upon me" in Hebrew refer to warfare (Hupfeld), and cannot therefore apply to Jeremiah. The expression, "to eat up my flesh," suggested, doubtless, by David's early experience, compares his enemies to beasts of prey; cf. Ps. xiv. 4 and xxii. 13, 16. The same figure is common in classic authors, *e.g.* Homer, 'Il.' IV. 35, XXII. 347, and XXIV. 212.

they stumbled] David may allude to some unrecorded event of the war before the final struggle, but the words probably express only his certainty of the enemies' discomfiture. The word "they" is emphatic; "as for them, they," &c.

3. *Though an host should encamp*] It is evident that these must be the words of a leader or king; they were probably written in anticipation of an immediate advance of Absalom's host, when "Israel and Absalom pitched in the land of Gilead," 2 S. xvii. 26.

4—6. These two verses evidently imply that the Psalmist is in exile, but is confident that his desire will be granted, that he will speedily return to the sanctuary, and abide there permanently.

4. *the beauty*] Or, "the graciousness." The word (which occurs but seldom, *e.g.* Ps. xc. 17, Zech. xi. 7) implies grace, beauty, loveliness. David speaks not of the outward beauty of the sanctuary, but of the gracious attributes which its ritual symbolized. Of that delight absence could not deprive him, though, like a true Israelite, he longed for the outward ordinances, which enabled him more vividly to realize the invisible: see Introd. § 6.

to inquire] Or, "to contemplate." The Hebrew implies delight in contemplating (Ges., Hupf.); there is some authority for another rendering, "to visit every morning:" Del., Rashi, Mendel.

in his temple] Or, "palace." This expression is not restricted to the Solomonian temple; the tabernacle consecrated by the visible symbols of God's Presence is here meant. See note on Ps. v. 7; in the following verse this palace is expressly called a tabernacle, or tent, an appellation not much used by later writers.

5. *his pavilion*] Literally, "booth," constructed of branches of trees, but the word is used of the tabernacle, Ps. lxxvi. 2. The expressions in this verse are figurative, and shew that David's mind dwelt wholly on the spiritual reality which the tabernacle represented. Hence the introduction of the word "rock," which is familiar to David (see note on xviii. 1), but has no special connection with the tabernacle of Jerusalem.

6. *head be lifted up*] Cf. Ps. iii. 3. In this verse the Psalmist undoubtedly predicts a speedy and complete deliverance, and restoration to his home at Jerusalem.

sacrifices of joy] Or, as in the margin, "shouting;" that is, offered with shouts of thankful exultation, or "with the blare of trumpets:" see note on Ps. lxxxix. 15: so vividly he realizes the near triumph.

I will sing] The words in Eph. v. 19 are taken from the LXX. version of this passage.

7—12. As in so many psalms of David, there follows a rapid and complete change of tone. So long as the Psalmist fixes his thoughts wholly on God's grace and promise, he has no feeling but joy and exultation; but when he reverts to his own state he is brought at once to his knees in earnest, almost plaintive prayers.

7. The cry is now for mercy, not for victory. The shadows are falling on David's heart.

my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me.

‖ Or, *My heart said unto thee, Let my face seek thy face*, &c.

8 ‖ *When thou saidst*, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.

9 Hide not thy face *far* from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.

† Heb. *will gather me.*

10 When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD † will take me up.

11 [d] Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in † a plain path, because of † mine enemies.

[d] Ps. 25. 4. & 86. 11. & 119.

† Heb. *a way of plainness.*

12 Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty.

† Heb. *those which observe me.*

13 *I had fainted*, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

14 [e] Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

[e] Ps. 31. 24. Isai. 25. 9. Hab. 2. 3.

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8. The meaning of this beautiful verse is clear, but the construction is difficult. The original runs thus, word for word: "To Thee said my heart, (*in answer to Thy command,*) 'Seek ye My face;' Thy face, O Lord, will I seek." The Psalmist hears the voice of invitation, his heart accepts and answers it; and, in order to express the completeness and promptitude of his acceptance, he puts the command and answer in direct juxtaposition. In plain unimpassioned prose the thought would be thus expressed: "Seek ye My face," that is the invitation which my heart heard, and answered at once, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek." The heart pleads the command and invitation: it addresses itself at once to God: this, it says, is what I heard; when I heard, I answered and obeyed.

Seek ye my face] Cf. Ps. xxiv. 6.

9. *far*] This word should be omitted; it is unnecessary, and rather disguises the close connection between this and the preceding verse. The Psalmist comes at once to seek God's face, and implores Him not to hide it. There is a consciousness of something in himself that may cause an alienation, hence the next earnest pleading, "put not away," reject not (the word is emphatic), "in anger Thy servant." The word "servant" (specially used of David, see note on inscription of xviii.) in the original comes last in this clause as a suggestion of hope; then follows the reference to his experience of past mercies, and prayers, which he feels assured cannot be rejected by God his Saviour: observe the reference to *v.* 1.

10. This verse does not imply that David had actually been forsaken by his own father and mother; but simply expresses, in a well-known proverbial form, the thought that even were he forsaken by all who loved him most tenderly God would never give him up. The force and beauty of such an appeal depend upon the feeling that a parent's love is the strongest bond that can bind man to man, yet incomparably weaker than that which binds him to God. Thus Hupfeld, and Calvin, who compares Isai. xlix. 15. Hitzig infers that the father and mother of the Psalmist were yet living.

will take me up] Here, with some inconsistency, the marginal correction suggests "gather," which it rejected in Ps. xxvi. 9, where the same word occurs. Either word expresses the true sense, that God will take up and gather unto Himself that which is abandoned by man.

11. The words "way" and "plain path" probably mean a way of safety and triumph, deliverance and security. The same word for plain, *i. e.* level, is used Ps. xxvi. 12, to which the Psalmist may perhaps refer. See also Isai. xxvi. 7, and Ps. cxliii. 10.

12. *Deliver me not over unto the will*] Cf. Ps. xli. 2; lit. unto the soul, *i. e.* desire, as in xxxv. 25.

mine enemies] See note on *v.* 2.

false witnesses] This may seem applicable to David's early life, when he was calumniated and persecuted by the courtiers of Saul; but the exile of the king was brought about chiefly by the machinations and calumnies of Absalom's supporters.

breathe out cruelty] Or, "violence;" a forcible image not uncommon in classic writers: but see Acts ix. 1.

13. *I had fainted*] These words express the meaning, but the sentence is far more vivid and forcible without them. It is a striking example of the well-known figure, aposiopesis. Dr Kay compares Gen. iii. 22.

to see the goodness] The Hebrew phrase (ראה ב), which is familiar, almost peculiar, to David, means to look with joy and triumph, elsewhere generally upon the defeat of enemies (see note on xxii. 17); but here, more in accordance with his better and deeper feelings, upon the "goodness" of Jehovah. See Exod. xxxiii. 19, to which there is an evident reference. The expression is nearly equivalent to that used above in the fourth verse, where the Hebrew has also the construction just noticed as peculiar to David.

PSALM XXVIII.

1 David prayeth earnestly against his enemies. 6 He blesseth God. 9 He prayeth for the people.

A Psalm of David.

UNTO thee will I cry, O LORD my rock; be not silent † to me: [a] lest, *if* thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit.

† Heb. *from me.*
[a] Ps. 143. 7.

2 Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee, when I lift up my hands ‖ toward thy holy oracle.

‖ Or, *towards the oracle of thy sanctuary.*

3 Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity, [b] which speak peace to their neighbours, but mischief *is* in their hearts.

[b] Ps. 12. 2. Jer. 9. 8.

4 Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours: give them after the work of their hands; render to them their desert.

5 Because they regard not the works of the LORD, nor the operation of his hands, he shall destroy them, and not build them up.

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in the land of the living] Cf. Ps. cxvi. 9. The expression is held by some critics (Hupf.) to denote simply "in this life," in contradistinction from Sheol, or the state after death; but in the very numerous passages where it is used by the Prophets, especially by Ezekiel (xxvi. 20, xxxii., where it occurs six times), it evidently means the land inhabited by a race living in the fear and in the grace of God; and such appears to be its meaning here. What David longed for, and was now assured of, was restoration to the city of God.

14. *Wait on the* LORD] Cf. Pss. xxxvii. 34, xl. 1, cxxx. 5; Prov. xx. 22; Isai. xxv. 9.

be of good courage] Or, "be firm, and He will strengthen thy heart." The Psalmist is sure of the result. Cf. Deut. xxxi. 7, where Moses addresses these words to Joshua, about to enter the promised land. David had that example before him, and could therefore wait with certainty of victory. From first to last his feelings are those of a hero, depending wholly on God, and therefore full of hope.

PSALM XXVIII.

The language, tone of thought and feeling in this psalm, indicate circumstances similar to those of the one immediately preceding. The Psalmist is in great danger, his supplications are earnest and plaintive, but, as in that, and in others, of the same general character. The transition from prayer to blessing is sudden and complete; no doubt or fear remains, the future triumph is realized for the anointed king, and the psalm concludes with a hopeful intercession for the people. It is the prayer of a king.

The psalm has three strophes, of two, three, and four verses, thus increasing in length: see Introduction, Appendix, p. 172.

1. *silent to me*] Or, "from me," as in the margin, a pregnant construction common in Hebrew; involving two prayers, that God would not withhold an answer, nor turn away from His servant.

go down into the pit] *i.e.* the grave, or Sheol, the abode of the departed, but regarded in the gloomier aspect as the place where men are cast for their sins; it is not, however, equivalent to hell. David does not realize it as a state of torment, but of forgetfulness, the land where all things are forgotten, where sinners are lost without hope.

2. *lift up my hands*] Prayers were offered by the Hebrews, as by most ancient peoples, and still by Orientals, with uplifted hands, outspread as to receive God's gifts. Cf. Exod. ix. 29; Lam. ii. 19; Ps. cxli. 2.

toward] The worshipper turned naturally towards the place where the Lord marked His Presence. From this and other verses it appears that the custom, afterwards universal, was already adopted, viz. that of turning towards the Holy City, and in intention towards the sanctuary, even when absent from Jerusalem.

oracle] By the oracle there is no doubt that David denotes the "Holy of Holies," whether the Hebrew word means "oracle" (from *dabar*, speak), as was formerly held, or "farthest, *i.e.* western recess of the tabernacle," as most critics now take it. The word occurs elsewhere only in Kings and Chronicles. It must, however, be remembered that the outward act was but symbolical, and that the king may have simply held up his hands and addressed his prayers towards heaven as the true abode shadowed forth by the earthly sanctuary.

3. *Draw me not*] The figure is taken from a hunter drawing his prey by a cord, or in a net. Cf. Ps. x. 9. Thus in the book of Job, xxiv. 22, God is said to draw the mighty with His power. The imminence of some wide-spreading judgment is denoted.

5. *Because they regard not*, &c.] The root of wickedness is thus, in accordance with all the teaching of the Old and New Testaments, declared to be an evil heart of unbelief. By the works of the Lord, and the operations of His hands, the Psalmist denotes especially the

6 Blessed *be* the LORD, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications.

7 The LORD *is* my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.

‖ Or, *his strength.* † Heb. *strength of salvations.*

8 The LORD *is* ‖ their strength, and he *is* the † saving strength of his anointed.

‖ Or, *rule.*

9 Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: ‖ feed them also, and lift them up for ever.

PSALM XXIX.

1 *David exhorteth princes to give glory to God,* 3 *by reason of his power,* 11 *and protection of his people.*

A Psalm of David.

† Heb. *ye sons of the mighty.*

GIVE unto the LORD, O † ye mighty, give unto the LORD glory and strength.

† Heb. *the honour of his name.* ‖ Or, *in his glorious sanctuary.*

2 Give unto the LORD † the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD ‖ in the beauty of holiness.

3 The voice of the LORD *is* upon the waters: the God of glory thun-

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providential dealings and judicial interventions of God. The denial of a special providence is a characteristic mark of infidelity.

destroy] Literally, shatter, as a house in ruins.

build them up] This may mean simply, restore them after their total ruin, but the words seem to apply specially to Absalom, whose object was to found a dynasty, or in Hebrew idiom, a house: see Exod. i. 21.

6. *he hath heard*] The prayer brings the pledge of fulfilment in the complete assurance of divine favour. The supposition that David received an answer from the "oracle," or that he added these verses after deliverance from danger, rests upon a misapprehension; devout prayer and certainty of God's favour are inseparable; the clouds which hang over the divine presence are dispersed by the breath of prayer.

8. *their strength*] The strength of His people, not "his strength," as in the margin.

saving strength] The words are singularly emphatic, "strength of salvations," implying that all forms of salvation are derived to the nation through the anointed king, who thus stands out as the great type of the Saviour.

9. *feed them*] Or, **tend them.** God is represented as the shepherd of Israel; the word rendered "lift up" means bear them as a shepherd bears the lambs in his arms; see Isai. xl. 11, xlvi. 3, and lxiii. 9.

PSALM XXIX.

David, as he kept his father's flock at Bethlehem (1 S. xvi. 11), may have witnessed such a storm of thunder, lightning, and rain as is here painted; gathering round the summit of Hermon in the north, and shaking, at the last, the wilderness of Kadesh in the south. The peak of Hermon can be seen, almost through the whole extent of the promised land, to the Valley of the Dead Sea (Dean Stanley's 'S. and P.' p. 395; Thomson's 'L. and B.' p. 611). It is naturally introduced on this account, or as the representative of a mountain range: Kadesh (Note 1), towards Egypt, as a well-known, distant, and awful wilderness.

See a description, in Wilson's 'Travels,' of a storm at Baalbek (Note below), and in Stanley's 'Jewish Church' (Vol. I. p. 149, 1st ed.), of a thunderstorm at Sinai.

The LXX. add to the title a phrase, ἐξοδίου σκηνῆς, which seems to indicate that the psalm was sung (Lev. xxiii. 42) on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles. In the modern synagogues it is appointed for the first day of Pentecost.

1. *Give unto the* LORD, &c.] The angels round the Throne of Jehovah, Isai. vi. 3, are invited to mark His work, and to pay to Him fitting reverence (comp. Job i. 6, 7; Ps. ciii. 20; and *v.* 9 of this psalm). The phrase rendered *O ye mighty* (marg. sons of the mighty) occurs also in Ps. lxxxix. 6, and is most suitably interpreted there, as here, by "angels." But many commentators interpret "mighty men," which also gives an excellent sense: the mighty ones of earth are then called upon to see the work of God, and their own littleness in comparison with it.

The version of the Prayer-book, "Bring unto the Lord, O ye mighty, bring young rams unto the Lord," is from the LXX. and Vulgate, which read "Bring unto the Lord, O ye sons of God, bring unto the Lord young rams." The Syriac version also renders, "Bring unto the Lord young rams." There is no ground for doubting the correctness of the reading from which our translation is derived; and a probable conjecture may be formed as to the origin of the varieties of rendering in the above-mentioned translations. See Note below.

2. *in the beauty of holiness*] *i.e.* in vestments suited to holy service. See Ps. xcvi. 9; 1 Chro. xvi. 29; also 2 Chro. xx. 21; Note below: also Exod. xxviii. 2. The priests and Levites in Jehovah's sanctuary on earth attired themselves, on special occasions, in

dereth: the LORD *is* upon ‖ many waters.

4 The voice of the LORD *is* † powerful; the voice of the LORD *is* † full of majesty.

5 The voice of the LORD breaketh the cedars; yea, the LORD breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.

6 He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and [a] Sirion like a young unicorn.

7 The voice of the LORD † divideth the flames of fire.

8 The voice of the LORD shaketh the wilderness; the LORD shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh.

9 The voice of the LORD maketh the hinds ‖ to calve, and discovereth the forests: and in his temple ‖ doth every one speak of *his* glory.

10 The LORD sitteth upon the flood; yea, the LORD sitteth King for ever.

11 The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace.

‖ Or, *great waters.*
† Heb. *in power.*
† Heb. *in majesty.*
[a] Deut. 3. 9.
† Heb. *cutteth out.*
‖ Or, *to be in pain.*
‖ Or, *every whit of it uttereth,* &c.

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suitable vestments to do Him service; so the angels are bidden to make a similar preparation. The meaning of the words explained as above, "in vestments suited," &c. seems also probable from Ps. cx. 3.

3. *The voice of the* LORD, &c.] After the preparation (*vv.* 1 and 2), the angels looking on and wondering, the voice of God is heard afar off in the highest heavens. The thunder first mutters *upon the waters*, or *upon many waters*, *i.e.* above the waters of the firmament, where the palace of the Most High is fixed; Ps. civ. 3. See also Gen. i. 7; Ps. xviii. 11.

4. *The voice of the* LORD *is powerful; the voice of the* LORD *is full of majesty*] The voice of Jehovah comes nigher and nigher! It is repeated twice, and we hear it twice, "in power," and "majesty" (as in the marg.), before it descends and shakes terribly the earth.

5, 6. *The voice of the* LORD, &c.] The lightning falls and destroys the pride of Lebanon, the cedars which God planted, Ps. civ. 16. The rolling thunder shakes the huge mountains—we almost see them shaking—to their foundations. Lebanon skips like a calf: Sirion (or Hermon, Deut. iii. 9) like a **young bull**. See Note Num. xxiii. 22.

The mountains which follow are probably indicated by "them." The stop should be at "Lebanon;"

"He maketh them also to skip: as a calf
Lebanon,
Sirion as a young wild bull."

Thunder and lightning and the roar of the tempest are all expressed in the voice of God.

7. *The voice of the* LORD, &c.] The lightning, implied in its effects in *v.* 5, is now *seen*, following the thunder in flashes of (forked) flame. Cf. Ov. 'Met.' II. 848; Sen. 'H. Œt.' 17. The abruptness of the words, and measure of the verse in the original, seem to place its zigzag before the eye. See Note below.

8, 9. *The voice of the* LORD, &c.] The hinds (Note below), through terror and affright, bring forth their young before the time (see Plutarch 'Sympos.' IV., Quæst. 2; Pliny, 'N. H.' VIII. 47): the forests are stripped of bark and branches: and everywhere in God's temple of heaven and earth (see *v.* 1) a voice is raised, singing "Glory to Him that reigneth." The literal rendering of the last clause of the verse is "and everywhere in His Temple (one) crying Glory:" the participle expressing that the voice is heard whilst the tempest rages.

The deadly terror of the hinds suggests the terror of animated nature: the baring (see Note below) of the forest (*v.* 9) completes the picture of inanimate nature—mountain (*vv.* 5 and 6), desert (*v.* 8), and forest, shaken and shattered; and the voice (*v.* 9) proclaims that all is done in mercy. The repetition of the voice again and again expresses the fury of the storm; the number (7) of repetitions recalls Rev. x. 3, and other places of Scripture.

10. *The* LORD *sitteth upon the flood*] Or lit. "Jehovah sits over (ruling and moderating) the flood," &c. A vast deluge of rain which accompanies the tempest (see the description quoted from Wilson, Note below) is intimated by the word used commonly to designate the great deluge: Gen. vi. 17. But Jehovah rules it; and is, always, a King, sitting on His throne for ever. It seems abrupt and too elliptical, to translate "The Lord sat by the flood," *i.e.* "the great deluge" (as many critics do), and to leave the connection of the word with the description of the psalm to be inferred. The concluding verse, which is the point of the psalm, suggests a topic of consolation. Jehovah, Who rules the storm, and is mighty and terrible to strike, protects His people (see the preceding psalm, *v.* 8), and is mighty to save.

NOTES on Psalm xxix.

1. The words of the LXX. version are, *ἐνέγκατε τῷ Κυρίῳ υἱοὶ Θεοῦ, ἐ. τ. Κ. υἱοὺς κριῶν*: the Vulgate reads, "Afferte Domino, filii Dei, afferte Domino filios arietum." The Syriac translator must have read בְּנֵי אֵילִים, instead of בְּנֵי אֵלִים. Probably אֵילִים ("rams") was first introduced as a marginal correction of אֵלִים ("mighty ones"), then crept into the text, and was combined with the true reading in the text from which the LXX. translated.

2. The Hebrew phrase in 2 Chro. xx. 21 is rendered in A. V. *Singers that should praise the beauty of holiness*, and so in many versions. But most recent expositors render "in the beauty of holiness," and explain as above. Hupfeld renders the verse of the psalm, "Worship the Lord in (His) glorious majesty," regarding the phrase בְּהַדְרַת־קֹדֶשׁ as describing the Attributes of God, *i.e.* Glory, Honour, Holiness. It is noticeable that "dress" or "vestment," anyhow, is inferred only, not expressed.

7. The meaning is plain: *The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire: i.e.* "the voice of the Lord hurls a scathing flame of forked fire." The exact import of the word which the A. V. renders *divideth* is doubtful: in Isai. x. 15 it means "cuts" as with an axe. The rendering of Vatabl., with which agree the Syr., Chald., etc., "Dissectas, *i.e.* flammas, ejaculat," seems to agree with the A. V. The marginal rendering "cutteth out," with which agree Calv., Kay, etc., conveys the idea that the voice "cuts out" the flame as a spark is cut out of stones: Deut. viii. 9. The LXX. and Vulg., "cuts through a flame of fire."

8, 9. The place of Plut. is, *Καὶ γὰρ τὰ θρέμματα διδάσκουσι βροντῆς γενομένης οἱ ποιμένες εἰς ταὐτὸ συνθεῖν καὶ συννεύειν· τὰ γὰρ σποράδην ἀπολειφθέντα διὰ τὸν φόβον ἐκτιτρώσκει, i.e.* "Shepherds accustom their flocks in a thunderstorm to keep together, and put their heads in the same direction; for such as are left alone and separated from the rest, through terror cast their young." The place of Pliny is, "tonitrua solitariis ovibus abortus inferunt; remedium est congregare eas, ut cœtu juventur." The original authority for this is evidently Aristotle ('H. A.' ix. 3, 4, p. 311), *Διδάσκουσι δ' οἱ ποιμένες τὰ πρόβατα συνθεῖν, ὅταν ψοφήσῃ: ἐὰν γὰρ βροντήσαντος ὑπολειφθῇ τις καὶ μὴ συνδράμῃ, ἐκτιτρώσκει ἐὰν τύχῃ κύουσα.*

8. Kadesh (see Gen. xiv. 7). The messengers were sent out from Kadesh, in the wilderness of Paran, to spy out the land (Num. xiii. 26). The report of the messengers terrified the people (xiii. 28, etc.), and Moses sent out messengers from "Kadesh, in the desert of Zin," to ask a passage through Edom (Num. xx. 1). These two places are the same; Paran and Zin are the same vast wilderness—Paran to the south, Zin to the north, and Kadesh between them. The wilderness was great and terrible (Deut. i. 19).

9. The word *discovereth* seems taken from the LXX. and Vulg. versions; which read respectively, *ἀποκαλύψει δρυμούς*, and *revelabit condensa*. The probable meaning of the unusual Hebrew word יְחֻשֹּׂף is "strips," *i.e.* of "leaves" and "branches," or of "bark" (Joel i. 7).

10. Wilson's 'Travels,' quoted by Tholuck p. 146. "I was here overtaken by a storm, as if all the floodgates of heaven were opened; it came down in a moment, and raged with such fury that you would have imagined the end of all things come. A horrible darkness covered the whole land, the rain poured down in rivers, and dashing along the sides of the mountains, enveloped them and everything in an impenetrable mist and horror." Dr Stewart ('Tent and Khan,' pp. 139, 140) describes thus a thunderstorm at Sinai: "Every bolt, as it burst with the roar of a cannon, seemed to awake a series of distant echoes on every side. They swept like a whirlwind among the higher mountains, becoming faint as some mighty peak intervened, and bursting with undiminished volume through some yawning cleft, till the very ground trembled with the concussion. It seemed as if the mountains of the whole peninsula were answering one another in a chorus of the deepest bass. Ever and anon a flash of lightning dispelled the pitchy darkness, and lit up the tent as if it had been day; then, after the interval of a few seconds, came the peal of thunder, bursting like a shell, to scatter its echoes to the four quarters of the heavens, and overpowering for a moment the loud howlings of the wind." See also the image of a furious rain, Matt. vii. 27.

PSALM XXX.

1 *David praiseth God for his deliverance.* 4 *He exhorteth others to praise him by example of God's dealing with him.*

A Psalm *and* Song *at* the dedication of the house of David.

I WILL extol thee, O Lord; for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me.

2 O Lord my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me.

3 O LORD, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.

4 Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks ‖ at the remembrance of his holiness.

5 For † his anger *endureth but* a

‖ Or, *to the memorial.*
† Heb. there is
but *a moment in his anger.*

PSALM XXX.

This psalm expresses deep thankfulness for deliverance from a danger, which had brought the writer nigh unto death, 1, 3; it had been accompanied, probably, by bodily, 2, certainly by severe mental, 7, suffering; and had been preceded by a state of prosperity, 6, 7, during which the Psalmist had given way to spiritual temptation, 6: the deliverance was granted in answer to earnest prayer, 8—10, and celebrated by festivities, 11, and public thanksgiving, 12. These points stand out clearly, and accord with the inscription, which states that it was written by David, as a hymn to be used at the dedication of the house. The internal evidences of Davidic authorship are strong, both as regards style and tone of thought; its exceeding beauty is recognized by Ewald, who calls it a model hymn of thanksgiving, composed in the best age of Hebrew poetry for recitation in the temple. Two events in David's history claim attention. (1) The dedication of the site of the temple in Mount Moriah, when David said, "This is the house of the Lord God," 1 Chro. xxii. 1. This has in its favour the Jewish tradition, the natural meaning of "dedication" (the corresponding words in Greek *ἐνεκαινίσθη*, *ἐγκαινισμός* are used in 1 Macc. iv. 54, 56, at the reconsecration of the altar of incense), and the attendant circumstances of great prosperity, presumption, punishment, and suffering: the objection that David was not smitten by the pestilence seems to have little weight, considering the intense agony and prostration of spirit which must have brought him nigh unto death during its ravages. (2) Some critics, however, hold that David wrote the psalm to celebrate the erection of a fortified palace on Mount Zion, which he acknowledged as a sign "that the Lord had established him king over Israel." The word dedication may properly be used of a house; cf. Deut. xx. 5. Thus Del., Moll, Perowne: but that event was not preceded by affliction, mental or bodily, which could suggest such language as pervades this psalm. The word "house" is not decisive, since it is used absolutely of the palace in the official title of the chief officer who was "over the house" (compare the Egyptian *mer-per*, "master of the house," *i.e.* of the palace; *per-ao*, "the great house," *i.e.* the palace): but it applies even more naturally to the abode of God on Moriah, called "the mountain of the house." In the Jewish ritual this psalm is used on the festival which commemorates the dedication of the temple: a custom of great antiquity noted in the Talmud: see Delitzsch. The inscription should, probably, be rendered, A psalm, a hymn for the dedication of the house by David.

The structure is regular: four strophes each of three verses.

1. *I will extol thee*] Thus Exod. xv. 2; Ps. xxxiv. 3, and xcix. 5, 9; where A. V. has "exalt." The word is here used with special reference to God's dealings with the Psalmist.

hast lifted me up] The expression is exactly equivalent to "thou hast brought up my soul," *v.* 3. It implies deliverance from a depth of misery. Thus the ancient versions. Hupfeld shews that the meaning "to draw up from a well" (upon which Hitzig relies as an argument that Jeremiah was the writer) is secondary. The word is peculiar, but expresses a feeling deeply seated in David's heart. See Ps. xviii. 46, 48, 49.

my foes] Cf. Pss. xxv. 2, xxxv. 19, 24. Though suitable to other occasions, this has a special fitness in reference to 2 S. xxiv. 14.

2. *thou hast healed me*] The word may apply, as in Ps. vi. 2, to mental affliction, the prostration of sympathy with suffering, caused by the Psalmist's sin. The reference, however, to a sickness all but mortal may be borne out by other passages which speak of fearful maladies, apparently at the time immediately preceding Absalom's revolt; see notes on Pss. xxxii., xxxviii., xli.

3. *kept me alive*] Or, "quickened me," restored me to life. The construction of the next clause is doubtful; the A. V. has the support of able critics, but the rendering may be "from those who go down to the pit," thus corresponding exactly with Ps. xxviii. 1. In this case the meaning would be that while others are perishing God has preserved the Psalmist's life.

4. *Sing unto the LORD*] David, as is his wont, see Ps. ix. 11, calls on his people, those especially who have experienced God's favour and grace (for such is the meaning of the word "saints;" see an excellent note by Hupfeld on iv. 3), to join in psalmody; the Hebrew word applies specially to public celebrations.

at the remembrance] Or, "to the memorial of His holiness," sc. "to His holy Name;" cf. Exod. iii. 15: "This is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations." So nearly all modern critics; the reference to Exodus is here obvious, and it is customary in David's psalms.

5. *For his anger*, &c.] Lit. for a mo-

moment; in his favour *is* life: weeping may endure † for a night, but † joy *cometh* in the morning.

† Heb. *in the evening.* † Heb. *singing.*

6 And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.

7 LORD, by thy favour thou hast † made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face, *and* I was troubled.

† Heb. *settled strength for my mountain.*

8 I cried to thee, O LORD; and unto the LORD I made supplication.

9 What profit *is there* in my blood, when I go down to the pit? [a] Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth?

[a] Ps. 6. 5. & 88. 11. & 115. 17.

10 Hear, O LORD, and have mercy upon me: LORD, be thou my helper.

11 Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness;

12 To the end that ‖ *my* glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever.

‖ That is, my *tongue*, or, my *soul.*

PSALM XXXI.

1 *David shewing his confidence in God craveth his help.* 7 *He rejoiceth in his mercy.* 9 *He prayeth in his calamity.* 19 *He praiseth God for his goodness.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

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ment (passeth) **in His anger, life in His favour**, *i.e.* God's anger against the man of prayer (see *v.* 2) is momentary: His grace is life-long.

weeping, &c.] The expression is highly figurative: "at eventide weeping comes to pass the night, but with the morning comes joy;" lit. "a shout of joy." So sudden is the change from night-long weeping to rapturous joy at the assurance of forgiveness. Compare Job xxxiii. 26, where the words "be favourable" and "joy" are precisely similar.

6. *And in my prosperity*] The transition of thought is very distinctly marked in the Hebrew. **And I**, *i.e.* as for me, **I said in my prosperity, I shall not be moved for evermore.** He recognizes the immediate cause of his affliction. He had been guilty of presumption (see Ps. xix. 13, and compare 2 S. xxiv. 3 and 17); and had used the very words which he takes as specially characteristic of the wicked, Ps. x. 6. The word rendered "prosperity" includes outward peace and success, such as led to David's special fault in numbering the people, and an inward feeling of self-complacency and careless ease; cf. Prov. i. 32.

7. *LORD, by thy favour*, &c.] Or, **O Lord, in Thy favour Thou hadst established strength for my mountain.** This is taken figuratively by many commentators (*e. g.* Rashi, Aben Ezra, Rosen., Hupf., Perowne), but it is far more natural to understand it of Mount Zion, which David had fortified, and the strength of which he now attributes to the favour of God; see 2 S. v. 9—11. The word "establish" has a special reference to the permanence of the strength thus assured. See 1 K. xv. 4; Ps. xviii. 33, where A. V. has "set me upon my high places."

thou didst hide thy face] Deut. xxxi. 17; Ps. civ. 29.

troubled] The Hebrew word denotes the extremity of dismay, as in Ps. vi. 2, 3, where A.V. has "vexed" and "sore vexed." It is used to describe Saul's feelings when he heard his doom, 1 S. xxviii. 21. Compare David's own words, 2 S. xxiv. 10, 14, 17.

8. *I cried to thee, O LORD*] Thus in the passage just quoted David's heart smote him; "and David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly."—*I made supplication;* "and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant," ib.: the form of the Hebrew verb and its derivation are emphatic, "supplex oravi ad impetrandam gratiam," Ros.

9. *my blood*] The expression is equivalent to death by a sudden blow, or sickness inflicted by God's anger: thus Job xvi. 18.

go down to the pit] This refers to *v.* 3; where, however, a different word is used for "pit:" here the meaning, though disputed, is connected with "corruption."

Shall the dust praise thee?] See Ps. vi. 5. Dust is often used as a synonym for the grave (see critical Note on Job xix.): here it evidently means the body in its state of dissolution; dust returned to dust. The word limits the assertion to the body; and with that limitation the expression is applicable to the Christian, who knows that when restored to life his body will be a spiritual body, to which the term "dust" cannot apply. Our Lord teaches us, "the night cometh, when no man can work."

11. *into dancing*] This must apply to a public celebration, praise and thanksgiving, such as took place at the exodus, see Exod. xv. 20; at the installation of the ark, 2 S. vi. 14, 16; and on all great occasions of thanksgiving; cf. Ps. cxlix. 3; 1 S. xviii. 6; Jer. xxxi. 4.

sackcloth] See 1 K. xx. 31. On no occasion could it be worn more fitly than during the pestilence caused by the king's sin.

12. *glory*] See note on xvi. 9.

[a] Ps. 22. 5. Isai. 49. 23.

IN [a] thee, O LORD, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness.

2 Bow down thine ear to me; deliver me speedily: be thou [†] my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me.

[†] Heb. *to me for a rock of strength.*

3 For thou *art* my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name's sake lead me, and guide me.

4 Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me: for thou *art* my strength.

5 [b] Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.

[b] Luke 23. 46.

6 I have hated them that regard lying vanities: but I trust in the LORD.

7 I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities;

8 And hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy: thou hast set my feet in a large room.

PSALM XXXI.

This psalm abounds in reminiscences of others which are undoubtedly Davidic, and it is attributed by many to the time of his persecution by Saul; but the tone of general languor and depression (see 9—13, 22), the description of his extreme and imminent danger, *v.* 2; of the devices and conspiracies against his life, 4, 8, 15, 18; of the reproach, contempt, and slander to which he was exposed; of the alienation of his friends and neighbours; and more especially of his mental and bodily affliction, and of "his deep consciousness of sin" (*v.* 10), which brought on such visitations, belong rather to a later period of his life, and agree very closely with the circumstances of his flight from Absalom. The urgency of his prayers, and the grounds on which he still rests his hopes, point to the same conclusion; he recalls the old epithets by which he had so often expressed his reliance on God; appeals to his constancy in the faith (1, 6), and his hatred of idolaters (6); and, notwithstanding all appearances, declares his firm belief in the overthrow of his enemies, and in his deliverance and restoration.

Ewald and Hitzig attribute the psalm to Jeremiah, on account of some obvious coincidences of style, which, however, are sufficiently accounted for by that prophet's well-known habit of using older compositions, especially the Psalter. See Introd. to Job, § 7. There are expressions in the psalm throughout which are wholly inapplicable to Jeremiah, *e.g.* 10, 21, where see notes. The supposition that it belongs to the time of the exile rests on no substantial grounds; and is, indeed, opposed to internal and external evidence.

1. *ashamed*] In the usual sense, disappointed, put to shame by the prostration of my hopes, and the success of my enemies; see xxv. 2.

2. *strong rock*] Lit. "rock of stronghold," or "hill-fort," or "rock;" see note on xviii. 2.

house of defence] Literally, "a house of fortresses;" strongly fortified on every side.

3. *my rock and my fortress*] Or, **my cliff and my fortress**; as in Ps. xviii. 2, David accumulates epithets. "Cliff" and "rock" differ; the former expressing steepness, the other strength.

4. *the net*] This may apply with equal force to the danger of capture by Saul, or to the devices of Ahithophel; cf. Ps. ix. 15.

my strength] **stronghold**, as in *v.* 2.

5. *Into thine hand*] The adoption of these words by our blessed Lord (see marginal reference) gives a peculiar interest to the psalm, which, if not predictive, is throughout typical; and has, therefore, a true prophetic character. The recorded instances of Christians who have used these words in dying are numerous, from St Polycarp and Basil onwards, representing "how many millions of unrecorded cases!" Kay.

O LORD God of truth] Or, Jehovah, God of truth; cf. Deut. xxxii. 4.

6. *regard lying vanities*] Or, **observe**, *i.e.* "worship." Lying vanities, or nothingnesses of falsehood, is an epithet properly applicable to idols; but includes all forms of idle superstition, the witchcraft, divinations, and teraphim, of which there are many notices in the age of David. Had the psalm belonged to a later period, especially that of the exile, the notice of idolatrous worship would have been more distinct and specific. The expression here is identical with that used in Jonah ii. 8; unquestionably (Hupf.) taken from this. The word rendered "vanities" means literally empty breath, a light breeze; it is the name Abel, Gen. iv. 2. It is used of idols, Deut. xxxii. 21, to which the Psalmist probably refers; and thrice by Jeremiah, ii. 5, viii. 19, xiv. 22: see also note on 2 K. xvii. 15.

7. *known*] In the true Scriptural sense of knowing as a friend, and approving; see Ps. i. 6.

The construction is rather difficult; probably "Thou hast known (me) in the troubles of my soul" is the true rendering.

8. *set my feet*] Ps. xviii. 33; see note on xxx. 7: each word alludes to other psalms.

9 Have mercy upon me, O LORD, for I am in trouble: mine eye is consumed with grief, *yea*, my soul and my belly.

10 For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing: my strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and my bones are consumed.

11 I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbours, and a fear to mine acquaintance: they that did see me without fled from me.

12 I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like †a broken vessel.

† Heb. *a vessel that perisheth.*

13 For I have heard the slander of many: fear *was* on every side: while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life.

14 But I trusted in thee, O LORD: I said, Thou *art* my God.

15 My times *are* in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me.

16 Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: save me for thy mercies' sake.

17 Let me not be ashamed, O LORD; for I have called upon thee: let the wicked be ashamed, *and* ‖let them be silent in the grave.

‖ Or, *let them be cut off for the grave.*

18 Let the lying lips be put to silence; which speak †grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous.

† Heb. *a hard thing.*

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in a large room] *i.e.* space, where the foot may move freely; cf. Ps. iv. 1; Job xxxvi. 16.

9. *mine eye*] See note on vi. 7.

my soul and my belly] By the latter word is meant the inner man, the centre of physical life and of emotions; see note on Job xxxii. 19.

10. *with grief*] Or, "anguish," not the same word as in the preceding verse.

mine iniquity] The confession is explicit. It does not exclude the assertion of integrity in dealings with fellow-men, friends or enemies; but it proves a consciousness of sin, committed and punished, such as is only found in psalms written after the king's great crime. In Ps. xviii. 23, where the expression "mine iniquity" occurs, it is spoken of as an inward temptation, hitherto successfully resisted. It is to be noted that Jeremiah never attributes his sufferings to his own iniquity.

my bones are consumed] See note on Job xx. 11. The expression does not necessarily imply that the disease had actually attacked the bones, but that they were racked by pains; exhausted by the prostration produced, whether by mental or bodily anguish; or, more probably, by the combination of both.

11. *among*] Literally, "from," a word which points to his enemies, such as Ahithophel, as the origin of the reproach. Another preposition in the Hebrew stands before neighbours, viz. "to." The reproach originated with his enemies, but was extended to, and taken up by, his neighbours: so that his acquaintance, those who ought to have known him best, were terrified, and "all forsook him, and fled." Cf. Matt. xxvi. 56; Mark xiv. 50. In this passage the typical character of the psalm is strongly marked.

12. *forgotten...out of mind*] Cf. Deut. xxxi. 21, "forgotten out of mouth."

broken] This expresses the sense correctly. David compares himself to a vessel broken, not merely in danger of being broken. The marginal amendment is unnecessary. A potter's vessel represents fragility and worthlessness, here both ideas are combined; cf. Ps. ii. 9; Isai. xxx. 14; Jer. xix. 11.

13. *slander*] The word denotes calumny creeping and spreading about secretly.

fear was on every side] This expression becomes almost proverbial in Jeremiah (see vi. 25, xx. 3, 10, xlvi. 5, xlix. 29; Lam. ii. 22): it is peculiarly appropriate, as describing the consternation of the king and his friends when the revolt of Absalom broke out.

took counsel] The two words imply a formal meeting of the council of David's enemies, and a crafty plot: just such a combination as we find in 2 S. xvii.

14. *But I*] The original, as elsewhere, marks the introduction of a fresh clause distinctly. "And as for me, I trusted, &c." It is the key-note of the psalm; see *v.* 7.

15. *My times*] All seasons of life with their vicissitudes of weal and woe. The same word is used 1 Chro. xxix. 30, in reference to David's reign.

16. *Make thy face to shine*] See Ps. iv. 6.

17. *let them be silent*] This translation is better than the marginal, "be cut off." The leading thought is that they shall be silenced, and for ever.

18. *grievous things*] Not exactly "a hard thing," as in the margin, but a proud, haughty

19 [c] *Oh* how great *is* thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; *which* thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!

[c] Isai. 64. 4. 1 Cor. 2. 9.

20 Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.

21 Blessed *be* the LORD: for he hath shewed me his marvellous kindness in a [1] strong city.

[1] Or, *fenced city.*

22 For I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes: nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee.

23 O love the LORD, all ye his saints: *for* the LORD preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.

24 [d] Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD.

[d] Ps. 27. 14.

PSALM XXXII.

1 *Blessedness consisteth in remission of sins.* 3 *Confession of sins giveth ease to the conscience.* 8 *God's promises bring joy.*

‖ *A Psalm* of David, Maschil.

‖ Or, A Psalm *of David giving instruction.*

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thing. The pride (ὕβρις) of David's enemies is a prominent thought, especially in the psalms which speak of Absalom and his abettors. Compare the words of Ahithophel, 2 S. xvii. 1—3. The two words for pride are nearly, but not quite, synonymous; the first is taken from the neck, stiff and thrown back; the other denotes a high and insolent demeanour.

19. *laid up*] Or, **stored up**. This speaks of the goodness in store, as the following clause, "thou hast wrought," of goodness in effect and manifestation before the eyes of men. David thus appeals to faith and experience.

20. *secret of thy presence*] Or, "of Thy face." The light of God's countenance shining on the just not only protects them, but hides them, as the pillar of fire in the wilderness. They are covered as with a mantle of light, and feel that no eye can penetrate the secrecy of their sanctuary; cf. Ps. xxxii. 7.

from the pride] The original word occurs only in this passage. Its meaning is not certain, but probably denotes **conspiracies**, from a root signifying "to bind together." There is no authority for our rendering "pride." The image is distinct: while David prays in God's presence, the conspirators are baffled, unable to find him, much less to succeed in their machinations; cf. 2 S. xvii. 14—22.

a pavilion] Or, "booth," a tent of boughs and leaves, suggesting at once the ideas of protection and refreshment; see Ps. xxvii. 5.

21. *in a strong city*] Or, fenced city. Lit. city of stronghold. It is not quite clear whether this means that God has shewn His kindness by delivering David, and restoring him to a state of security, or by protecting him in a city where he was besieged: in either case the expression may be figurative, but is certainly suggested by actual occurrences. The unsuitableness to Jeremiah is obvious. Delitzsch supposes an allusion to Ziklag, but it is more appropriate to David's position beyond the Jordan, while he was collecting forces to repel the army of Absalom, 2 S. xviii.

22. *in my haste*] The word exactly expresses the state of confused and hurried alarm to which the Psalmist has already alluded; see *v.* 13, and cf. 2 S. xv. 14. The same word is used 1 S. xxiii. 26.

cut off from before thine eyes] That was the most poignant feeling of the exile from the city where the ark was placed. In his banishment, David learned thoroughly to realize the fact of God's omnipresence. The resemblance with xxx. 7, 8 should be noted as a mark of authorship; the difference of expression, "in my haste" and "cut off," indicates different occasions.

23. *the faithful*] The Hebrew word includes trust and stedfastness.

24. See note on Ps. xxvii. 14.

all ye that hope in the LORD] See critical Note on Job xiii. 15, where the same word is used. Hope and trust are the special characteristics of the servant of God; the psalm begins with trust, and ends with hope.

PSALM XXXII.

This psalm has points of resemblance with the preceding, but it was evidently written under different circumstances. In that the Psalmist speaks chiefly of outward calamities, here he dwells altogether on inward and spiritual afflictions. There can be little doubt that it was composed by David very soon after his repentance, when he had time to meditate upon the past and to realize the blessing of forgiveness.

The most characteristic feature is the entire absence of allusion to outer and legal forms: the psalm is peculiarly and thoroughly evangelical: what David learned first in suffering he pours out in spiritual song. Written nearly at the same time with the 51st, but apparently somewhat later, it has been adopted

[a] Rom. 4. 7. BLESSED *is he whose* [a] transgression *is* forgiven, *whose* sin *is* covered.

2 Blessed *is* the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit *there is* no guile.

3 When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long.

4 For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.

5 I acknowledged my sin unto

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by the Church as one of the great penitential psalms. It is one of the seven which Augustine is said to have studied incessantly, and to have had written on the wall in front of his death-bed. It is used by the Jews at the close of the service on the Day of Atonement.

The structure is rhythmical, shewing the care which David bestowed upon the composition of a psalm intended to be a model and guide for penitents. There are six strophes, each with two verses; three end with Selah.

of David] Ewald's remarks are important as bearing upon the objections of the very few critics who have questioned the authorship. "The song is manifestly ancient, original throughout, evidencing a strong spirit. Hardly could the inner misery of a lacerated (zerrissenen) heart, together with the higher happiness of one again reconciled and healed, be described with more inwardness, impressiveness, and power than here. The harder the struggle in his heart so much more glorious is the victory, so much more limpid and joyous is the stream of the earnest word. The colour also of the language is Davidic, and there is no reason to doubt that it was sung after the transaction recorded 2 S. xii." Ewald treats Hitzig's objection that David's confession was not spontaneous as of very slight importance. David's conscience was quickened by the prophet's word; and if, as is probable, he composed this psalm some time after his repentance, he was able to trace and describe the inward tragedy through which his soul had passed, and by which it had been purified.

Maschil] Thirteen psalms bear this designation. The meaning is questioned, but the old interpretation, which connects it with the word *askil*, which occurs *v.* 8, "I will instruct thee," is probably correct. A didactic song, intended for instruction; thus Ges. LXX. συνέσεως, Jerome, "eruditio."

1. *transgression*, &c.] The Hebrew abounds in expressions for sin. David in this passage, and in others where he confesses and deplores his guilt (see *v.* 5, and li. 1—5), uses three words, which represent it (1) as an offence against God, "transgression;" (2) as an internal depravity or perversity, "iniquity;" and (3) as a defilement, "sin." For each of these a special remedy is supplied. The *transgression* is a heavy load, which is lifted up and taken away, for such is the meaning of the word rendered "forgiven:" *the sin*, or defilement, "is covered," a legal term, which is often equivalent to atonement; and the *iniquity*, inherent in a sinner, and not wholly eradicated while life continues, is not imputed. David, however, is throughout speaking not of legal acts which represent pardon and atonement, but of the grace which effectually bestows and applies both. Hence St Paul's appropriation of the thought (see marg. ref.), as expressing the inner harmony of spiritual emotions under both dispensations.

2. *imputeth not*] No word could more exactly express the thought. God does not take it into account, it is as though the iniquity were not there at all.

iniquity] This completes the threefold enumeration of sin; it is the evil habit, the state of antagonism to God, which, if imputed, would ensure utter destruction.

no guile] The one condition is that there be no dishonesty, no attempt to disguise, gloss over, extenuate, or justify the sin. The total absence of such a spirit proves that sin, great and deadly as it may be, is a stranger; that though admitted it is not welcomed, that when it is once clearly seen it is hated. David speaks of the first (cf. Gen. iii. 12, 13), the strongest and most enduring temptation of a sinner, and in stating the one condition of pardon he goes to the very root of evil.

3. *my bones*] See notes on Pss. vi. 2 and xxxi. 10. From this verse we learn that the long interval between the seduction of Bathsheba and the mission of Nathan was passed in bitter struggles of conscience, not without severe prostration of bodily powers. It is remarkable that no intimation of this is found in the history; but probably the sickness, of which there are many indications in the psalms, broke out at a later period.

my roaring] See note on Ps. xxii. 1. The cry of bitter anguish does not prove that the conscience is awakened; until that speaks out the roaring is in vain. Dr Kay compares Hosea vii. 14, "they have not cried unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds:" but in David's case the suffering, though of itself impotent, indicated inward life, and prepared the way for confession.

4. *moisture*] This translation, which has been questioned, is correct. Targ. "my

thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. [b] I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.

[b] Prov. 28. 13. Isai. 65. 24. 1 John 1. 9.

6 For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee [†] in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.

[†] Heb. *in a time of finding.*

7 [c] Thou *art* my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah.

[c] Ps. 9. 9.

8 I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: [†] I will guide thee with mine eye.

[†] Heb. *I will counsel thee, mine eye* shall be *upon thee.*

9 [d] Be ye not as the horse, *or* as the mule, *which* have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.

[d] Prov. 26. 3.

10 Many sorrows *shall be* to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about.

11 Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all *ye that are* upright in heart.

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freshness," or sap. Thus Ew., Hupf. The LXX., Jerome and other ancient versions differ.

5. The transition is described as sudden and complete; conscience once awakened finds no respite, seeks no delay; confession comes at once, at once followed by forgiveness. This accords exactly with the narrative. Nathan asks no more from the king, and at once declares his pardon. Observe that in this verse David again uses the three words of *v.* 1 to denote his sin, together exhausting all aspects, save that of rebellious and impenitent wickedness (Heb. *resha*), from which he is free; see note on Ps. i. 1.

6. *godly*] The word (*hasid*) is chosen, which exactly expresses the condition, one who is loved by God and responds to His love.

in a time] Lit., as in the marg., "in a time of finding," *i.e.* in a time of acceptance, when God is found in answer to prayer, and therefore gracious. Thus all the ancient versions. Compare Isai. xlix. 8 and lv. 6. Dr Kay renders it "at the time of visitation," and refers to Gen. xliv. 16; Num. xxxii. 23: Pss. x. 15, xvii. 3, xxxvi. 2; the sense thus elicited is true and thoroughly scriptural, but the other is generally accepted by critics.

surely] Or, "only:" sc. but this at least is certain.

floods of great waters] *i.e.* overwhelming calamities; a frequent figure of speech, especially suitable in a land subject to sudden inundation; see Ps. xviii. 4.

they shall not come nigh unto him] *i.e.* the waters shall not reach him. Our Prayer-book version suggests a different thought.

7. *hiding place*] See xxxi. 20, where the same word is rendered "the secret."

songs of deliverance] Such as Ex. xv.; Judg. v. For the expression "compass" compare *v.* 10; Ps. v. 12.

8. These words are spoken by the Psalmist in accordance with his pledge given in the first agony of confession, Ps. li. 12, 13. See also Luke xxii. 32, "when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." The last clause is correctly rendered in the margin, and means, "I will watch thee closely while counselling thee."

9. *whose mouth*, &c.] The expressions in this verse are obscure, but the general sense is correctly given, excepting in the last clause, "they will not come near to thee." The object of bit and bridle is not to keep the beast from the rider, but to make it obedient, to compel it to go where it is wanted. Man ought to need no such coercion to come near to God. The passage may be translated, "whose adornment is with bit and bridle for curbing, or it will not come nigh thee," *i.e.* which is adorned, but with trappings intended to subdue it, because of its stubbornness and unwillingness to come near its master. See Note below.

10. *Many sorrows*] Inflicted whether in mercy to compel them to come to God (see the last note), or in punishment for invincible obstinacy. LXX. μάστιγες: the Hebrew word applies specially to inflictions, as in Exod. iii. 7.

compass him] Cf. Deut. xxxii. 10.

11. The psalm ends as it begins with a short expression of feeling, more fervid and exulting, as the Psalmist more fully realizes the contrast between the past and the present.

NOTE on PSALM XXXII. 9.

This rendering follows Hupfeld. It seems to express most nearly the sense of an obscure passage. The meaning of עדי in the other passages where it occurs is certainly "ornament;" "trappings" is a proper term applied to a horse or mule. Dr Kay prefers the sense

"gaiety;" but in the passage which he quotes, ciii. 5, the word means appetite, not gaiety, which scarcely suits this or any other passage. The rendering "mouth" is generally abandoned: Ewald, who prefers this meaning, proposes another reading. בלם, *ά. λ.*, is admitted to mean "bind," "curb." The construction of the following clause is harsh; בל requires a finite verb; here, if the reading is correct, it is = בלי (which Hupf. suggests as a probable reading); sc. *no approaching;* קרב with אל certainly means friendly, not hostile approach. The A. V. follows the Rabbins, who were probably misled by the later usage, which confounded אל with על. The LXX. and the Vulg. render it correctly "qui non approximant ad te," Jerome "accedunt."

PSALM XXXIII.

1 *God is to be praised for his goodness,* 6 *for his power,* 12 *and for his providence.* 20 *Confidence is to be placed in God.*

REJOICE in the LORD, O ye righteous: *for* praise is comely for the upright.

2 Praise the LORD with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery *and* an instrument of ten strings.

3 Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise.

4 For the word of the LORD *is* right; and all his works *are done* in truth.

5 He loveth righteousness and judgment: [a]the earth is full of the [‖]goodness of the LORD.

6 [b]By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

[a] Ps. 119. 64.
[‖] Or, *mercy.*
[b] Gen. 1. 6, 7.

PSALM XXXIII.

This psalm is not attributed to David, nor are there any certain internal marks to designate either the author, the date, or the occasion of its composition (see however note on *v.* 17). It is a psalm of praise and thanksgiving, singularly bright, replete with beautiful imagery, and well adapted for the liturgical services of the temple.

There is no inscription, and in several Hebrew MSS. (8 Kenn., 10 De Rossi) it is joined on to the preceding psalm, probably on account of the close resemblance between the close of the one and the beginning of the other: but in all other points the two psalms represent a different state of mind and of circumstances. Dr Kay regards it as one of the "songs of deliverance" promised in Ps. xxxii. 7. There is, however, no reference in it to deliverance from the penalties due to sin.

The structure of the psalm is regular; it begins and ends with utterances of praise, each consisting of three verses, the intermediate portion of eight strophes, each of two verses: this arrangement appears to be intended for antiphonal recitation.

2. *harp*] The harp (corresponding to the Greek κιθάρα or κινύρα of the LXX.) and the psaltery represent two classes of stringed instruments, distinguished by the arrangement of the strings, the latter played with two hands. The latter half of the verse would be more correctly rendered, "with ten-stringed lute." Two instruments only are mentioned.

3. *a new song*] *i.e.* a song, either used for the first time in public psalmody, or, more probably, fresh from the Psalmist's heart. The expression occurs frequently, and in special connection with thanksgiving for deliverance; Ps. xl. 3, xcviii. 1; Isai. xlii. 10. See also Rev. v. 9, xiv. 3.

loud noise] Of trumpets, cymbals, and loud jubilant shouts; Ps. lxxxvii. 7.

4. *the word of the* LORD] *i.e.* the expression or manifestation of God's will, including all utterances whether in revelation or nature. There is no distinct personification of the Word, but a preparatory stage in the development of that fundamental truth of Christianity is traceable in this psalm; see *v.* 6.

all his works, &c.] Or, "and all His work *is* in truth" or faithfulness.

5. *righteousness and judgment*] The former denotes the essential principle, the second the manifestation in act of God's justice.

is full] Cf. Isai. vi. 3, xi. 9; Hab. iii. 3; Ps. civ. 24.

goodness] Or, graciousness, lovingkindness.

6. The Word of the Lord is the command which called the universe into existence; the Breath is the quickening Spirit which brooded on the abyss, and gave life and form to all things. The reference to Genesis is unmistakeable, but it is remarkable how the Psalmist detaches the two great truths involved, or intimated, in that first word of revelation, and expresses them in terms which find their full explanation in the doctrine of the Trinity. Delitzsch ('Apologetik,' p. 432) remarks, "The New Testament doctrine of the Word incarnate in Christ is here in germ, *im Werden.*" See also Liddon's 'Bampton Lectures,' II. p. 95.

all the host of them] The word "host" (as in Gen. ii. 1) combines the two ideas of multitude and order, and is therefore nearly equivalent to the Greek Cosmos. It declares also

7 He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses.

8 Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.

9 For he spake, and it was *done*; he commanded, and it stood fast.

[c] Isai. 19. 3. † Heb. *maketh frustrate.*

10 [c] The LORD † bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect.

[d] Prov. 19. 21. Isai. 46. 10. † Heb. *to generation and generation.*

11 [d] The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart † to all generations.

[e] Ps. 65. 4. & 144. 15.

12 [e] Blessed *is* the nation whose God *is* the LORD; *and* the people *whom* he hath chosen for his own inheritance.

13 The LORD looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men.

14 From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth.

15 He fashioneth their hearts alike; he considereth all their works.

16 There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength.

17 An horse *is* a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver *any* by his great strength.

[f] Job 36. 7. Ps. 34. 15. 1 Pet. 3. 12.

18 [f] Behold, the eye of the LORD *is* upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy;

19 To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine.

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a truth of most practical importance when the psalm was written, viz. that the objects of the widest spread and most attractive forms of idolatrous worship (see note on Job xxxi. 26) are the creatures and servants of God.

7. *as an heap*] This expression describes the convex surface of the ocean apparently overhanging the plains, but it undoubtedly includes a reference to Exod. xv. 8 and Josh. iii. 13—16. The Hebrew word occurs only in those passages, and in Ps. lxxviii. 13, which is taken from Exodus.

storehouses] The depths are thus represented as depositories of waters which at God's bidding may overflow the earth, whether for purposes of mercy or of judgment; see Job xxxviii. 22, &c.: the practical inference is drawn out in the following verse.

9. *stood fast*] This refers to the permanence of all the works of God in creation. See Ps. cxix. 90, 91.

10. From God's works in creation the Psalmist passes to His manifestations of Himself in history. On the one hand He frustrates all undertakings which are not in accordance with His will; on the other (*v.* 11), He gives eternal effect to His own purposes. The world's history is but a development of the principles which have their abode and origin in God.

the counsel] This shews the antithesis with *v.* 11.

devices] Or, **purposes**.

11. *thoughts*] Or, **purposes**, as in the preceding verse, where the same word is used.

12. Compare Deut. xxxiii. 29, a passage which seems to have been present to the Psalmist's mind.

14. *looketh upon*] The Hebrew word is very rare: in Isai. xiv. 16, where the A. V. has "shall narrowly look upon thee," and in Song Sol. ii. 9, it evidently denotes close inspection. Dr Kay observes that the Rabbinical term (*hashgachah*) for providence is derived from it.

15. *alike*] Or, **altogether**; every heart is fashioned, *i.e.* moulded by Him; derives from Him *all* its faculties and endowments. Hitzig and Hupfeld, followed by Perowne(?), take יחד to mean "pariter," which gives the sense, "He at once mouldeth their hearts and understandeth all their wants. He knows the heart because He formed it."

16. *There is no king*] Or, **The king is not saved**: the Israelite thinks of his own king, and attributes his salvation exclusively to God.

17. *An horse*] Ps. xx. 7; Prov. xxi. 31. These two verses imply that the king has a powerful army, many strong warriors, and a force of cavalry. The psalm must therefore have been written in a prosperous reign, but probably not in David's time, when horses were little, if at all, used in warfare. The whole tone of the psalm seems to fit the reign of Asa or Jehoshaphat. Hitzig recognizes it as a production of the period before the captivity, probably in Josiah's reign, after the defeat of the Scythians. Ewald, on the contrary, places it in the latest group of psalms.

19. *in famine*] A common infliction in those days, but one which would be prominently before the mind of a contemporary of Ahab: see note on *v.* 16.

20 Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he *is* our help and our shield.

21 For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name.

22 Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.

PSALM XXXIV.

1 *David praiseth God, and exhorteth others thereto by his experience.* 8 *They are blessed that trust in God.* 11 *He exhorteth to the fear of God.* 15 *The privileges of the righteous.*

A Psalm of David, when he changed his behaviour before ‖Abimelech; who drove him away, and he departed.

‖ Or, *Achish*, 1 Sam. 21. 13.

I WILL bless the LORD at all times: his praise *shall* continually *be* in my mouth.

2 My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear *thereof*, and be glad.

3 O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.

4 I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

5 ¹They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed.

¹ Or, *They flowed* unto him.

6 This poor man cried, and the LORD heard *him*, and saved him out of all his troubles.

7 The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

8 O taste and see that the LORD *is* good: blessed *is* the man *that* trusteth in him.

9 O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for *there is* no want to them that fear him.

10 The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good *thing*.

11 Come, ye children, hearken un-

PSALM XXXIV.

In the introductory remarks on the 25th psalm the close connection with this psalm has been pointed out. Both are alphabetical psalms, and both have two rather singular deviations from alphabetical order, omitting the sixth letter (*vav*), and adding a verse beginning with the same letter and word (*podeh*). It is attributed to David; it certainly belongs to the writer of that psalm, and it contains nothing in point of style or of tone of thought unworthy of the king. The didactic character may possibly indicate a later period in his life than that referred to in the inscription; but little dependence can be placed upon merely subjective impressions; in fact, the great distress and anxiety of the Psalmist, combined with freedom from all consciousness of deep guilt and fearful transgression, harmonize more entirely with that occasion, than with the circumstances of David's expulsion from his kingdom.

Abimelech] The name of the king was Achish, see marg. This may possibly be a mistake of the writer, who may have quoted from memory; but it is more probable that the king bore two names, the one personal, the other dynastic. In the latter case it would be a strong argument in favour of the inscription, which must have been derived from an independent source, and, in all probability, preserves an ancient tradition.

2. *shall make her boast*] Cf. Ps. xliv. 8; Jer. ix. 24; 1 S. ii. 1; Luke i. 46. The Hebrew word implies grateful exultation, as in Hallelujah.

4. *I sought the* LORD, &c.] Cf. 2 Chro. xv. 2, 4, 15; Jer. xxix. 13; Matt. vii. 7.

5. *looked...were lightened*] This translation is preferable to that given in the margin, and it is adopted by modern commentators. The proposition is general; all, who look to the Lord stedfastly, see and reflect the light of His countenance; compare 2 Cor. iii. 18.

6. *This poor man*] Not merely the Psalmist himself, but any one poor, *i. e.* humble and contrite, believer.

7. *The angel of the* LORD] The mention of one Angel, who is yet represented as encamping around about His servants, directs our thoughts to the Angel of the covenant, the captain of the host of Jehovah (see Josh. v. 14), who with His "holy ones" protects His people on every side; compare Gen. xxxii. 1, 2. The word "encampeth" probably refers to Mahanaim, the two camps. in that passage. See Pusey, 'Daniel,' p. 519. This interpretation is at once the most literal and the most satisfactory. Some commentators take the Angel to be a collective name, but without any sufficient reason, or justification from scriptural usage.

8. *taste*] A word frequently used for personal experience, the knowledge acquired by direct contact; cf. Heb. vi. 4.

10. *young lions*] Types of the cruel and the violent, Ps. xxxv. 17. See note on Job iv. 9—11.

to me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

[a] 1 Pet. 3. 10.

12 [a] What man *is he that* desireth life, *and* loveth *many* days, that he may see good?

13 Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.

14 Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.

[b] Job 36. 7. Ps. 33. 18. 1 Pet. 3. 12.

15 [b] The eyes of the LORD *are* upon the righteous, and his ears *are open* unto their cry.

16 The face of the LORD *is* against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

17 *The righteous* cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.

† Heb. *to the broken of heart.*

18 The LORD *is* nigh † unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth † such as be of a contrite spirit.

† Heb. *contrite of spirit.*

19 Many *are* the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.

20 He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.

21 Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous ‖ shall be desolate.

‖ Or, *shall be guilty.*

22 The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.

PSALM XXXV.

1 *David prayeth for his own safety, and his enemies' confusion.* 11 *He complaineth of their wrongful dealing.* 22 *Thereby he inciteth God against them.*

A Psalm of David.

PLEAD *my cause*, O LORD, with them that strive with me:

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11. *ye children*] An address at once affectionate and authoritative, befitting the father and teacher of the people. Hence its frequent use in the book of Proverbs, and its adoption by our Lord.

12. *that he may see good*] Cf. *v.* 10 and iv. 6.

13. *tongue*] See James iii. 2—10. Sins of the tongue are frequently noted in the book of Proverbs, iv. 24, xii. 13, xxi. 23; the special mention here may refer to the occasion pointed out in the inscription.

14. *pursue it*] Cf. Ps. xxxviii. 20; Prov. xxi. 21; Isai. li. 1; where it is rendered "follow after;" the word implies great exertion and eagerness in the pursuit.

15. The quotation of this verse by St Peter, 1, iii. 12, and the frequent allusions to other parts of the psalm in the New Testament, shew how strong a hold it had upon the national spirit.

16. *the remembrance*] The dread that together with a man's posterity his name and memory should utterly perish is specially characteristic of the Semitic races; it is alluded to with peculiar force in the didactic and lyrical poetry both of the Hebrews and Arabians. Cf. Job xviii. 17, xxxi. 8; Pss. xxi. 10, cix. 13.

17. *The righteous*] It is barely possible that the Psalmist may be speaking of the effect of punishment or warning upon evildoers (see Ps. cvii. 17—21), but our translators were probably right in supplying the words "the righteous" from *v.* 15.

18. *broken*] The two words, "broken" and "contrite," applied severally to the heart and spirit, denote more than sorrow for sin; all that is hard and stubborn in the feelings and mind, all that resists the entrance of grace or its free working, must be broken and crushed in the presence of the Saviour. Cf. li. 17, cix. 16; Prov. xvi. 19, xxix. 23; Isai. lvii. 15, lxi. 1, lxvi. 2.

20. *not one of them is broken*] The passage in St John's Gospel (xix. 33—36) which speaks of our Saviour's exemption from this indignity of crucifixion may possibly refer to this psalm, as well as to Exod. xii. 46. The Psalmist also may have had in mind the typical meaning of that part of the ritual; for the lamb represented innocence and acceptance with God.

21. *Evil shall slay*] Evil is, so to speak, personified; it not only occasions but directly causes death. The sinner is slain by his own crime: he is an unconscious suicide, whatever may be the apparent cause of his destruction. Cf. Ps. vii. 15, 16.

desolate] The margin has "guilty," but the original word includes both the imputation of guilt and its just penalty: "shall be punished," or "condemned," would express the meaning better.

22. *and none*, &c.] Or, **and none shall be condemned of them that trust in Him.** The *last* word in the psalm speaks of faith; here, as throughout the Word of God, the condition and pledge of justification. Cf. lv. 23.

fight against them that fight against me.

2 Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help.

3 Draw out also the spear, and stop *the way* against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I *am* thy salvation.

[a] Ps. 40. 14. & 70. 3.

4 [a] Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt.

[b] Job 21. 18. Ps. 1. 4. Isai. 29. 5. Hos. 13. 3.

5 [b] Let them be as chaff before the wind: and let the angel of the LORD chase *them*.

6 Let their way be [†] dark and slippery: and let the angel of the LORD persecute them.

[†] Heb. *darkness and slipperiness*

7 For without cause have they hid for me their net *in* a pit, *which* without cause they have digged for my soul.

8 Let destruction come upon him [†] at unawares; and let his net that he hath hid catch himself: into that very destruction let him fall.

[†] Heb. which *he knoweth not of.*

9 And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD: it shall rejoice in his salvation.

10 All my bones shall say, LORD, who *is* like unto thee, which deliver-

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PSALM XXXV.

This psalm probably belongs to the earlier life of David; it is singularly animated; the transitions of thought and feeling are abrupt; prayer, imprecations, expostulations, complaints, and hopeful ejaculations succeed in rapid alternation; the images are vigorous and graphic, but not wrought out in detail; the position is not that of a king, but of a subject, harassed, poor, beset by enemies, liable to judicial persecution; there is no special consciousness of guilt, but perfect confidence in God's righteousness, and in his own: the language also is rugged, with many archaic forms and obscure idioms, the rhythm highly lyrical and full of movement. All these characteristics point to the time when David was pursued by Saul. Köster remarks the similarity of expression in *v.* 1 and 1 S. xxiv. 12, 15. There is an apparent connection between this and the preceding psalm, though they differ exceedingly in tone: they are the only psalms which expressly name the Angel of the Lord.

Hitzig and Ewald assign the psalm to Jeremiah; but the tone is that of a warrior; nor is there any one point incompatible with David's character and position.

The metrical structure is peculiar and highly artistic; three divisions, each ending with ejaculations of thanksgiving; see *vv.* 3, 9, 18, and 27, 28. The first and last divisions consist severally of three strophes, the middle division of four: this presents the schema, 3, 3, 4, | 4, 4, | 4, 3, 3. See Introduction, Appendix, p. 172.

1. *Plead my cause*] The expression belongs properly to judicial proceedings; David is wrongfully accused, and prays to God to be his advocate; but inasmuch as the cause is carried on not in a court of justice but in the battle-field, the advocate must be also a champion, and the images at once pass over into the sphere of warfare. As in all David's earlier poems the representation of the Lord is what is called anthropomorphical; he realizes the manifestation vividly as that of a hero, "a man of war," Exod. xv. 3. Such imagery is characteristic of David; see Ewald's remarks, quoted in the note on iii. 6.

3. *stop*] This translation follows the old versions, it is defended by many commentators (thus Hitz., Kay), and gives a good clear sense; but, on the whole, it seems more probable that the word rendered "stop" means "a battle-axe." The Psalmist, as is not unusual with David (see *e.g.* Ps. xviii.), exhausts all the imagery which belongs to his conception of the Divine manifestation.

4. *seek after my soul*] See note on 1 S. xx. 1, where the frequent recurrence of this expression in Davidic psalms is noticed.

5, 6. The Psalmist represents his foes' discomfiture under two figures; the first taken from common experience, but with the introduction of a striking image, which raises it into the higher sphere of poetry. As they are scattered in a confused rout, utterly unresisting, like the light chaff in the windy winnowing field, the Angel of the Lord, the defender of the pious (Ps. xxxiv. 7), smites (not *chases*) each in turn with his strong arm, and throws him down. They seek safety in flight, but the roads are dark and slippery: they stumble, are pursued, overtaken, and fall under the blows of the mighty Being whose wrath they have provoked.

6. *slippery*] "The tracks in the limestone hills of Palestine are often worn as smooth as marble; cf. Ps. lxxiii. 18." Kay.

7. The arrangement of this verse is clearer with a slight transposition, "Without cause they have hid for me a net, without cause they have digged a pit for my soul." Thus the Syriac, and the generality of modern critics; see Hupfeld's note.

est the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the poor and the needy from him that spoileth him?

† Heb. *Witnesses of wrong.* † Heb. *they asked me.*

11 †False witnesses did rise up; †they laid to my charge *things* that I knew not.

12 They rewarded me evil for good *to* the †spoiling of my soul.

† Heb. *depriving.*

13 But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing *was* sackcloth: I ‖humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom.

‖ Or, *afflicted.*

14 I †behaved myself †as though *he had been* my friend *or* brother: I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth *for his* mother.

† Heb. *walked.* † Heb. *as a friend, as a brother to me.*

15 But in mine †adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together: *yea*, the abjects gathered themselves together against me, and I knew *it* not; they did tear *me*, and ceased not:

† Heb. *halting.*

16 With hypocritical mockers in feasts, they gnashed upon me with their teeth.

17 Lord, how long wilt thou look

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10. *All my bones*] The bones are regarded in Hebrew physiology as the seat of the most acute sensations, whether of pain or pleasure; see note on Ps. vi. 2.

the poor] As an epithet of spiritual poverty and deep humility it would be suitable to the king, and is often used by David in his later psalms; but joined with "needy" it rather points to his early life. See, however, Ps. lxxxvi. 1.

11. *False witnesses*] Or, "malignant witnesses."

they laid to my charge] The marginal translation is accurate, but the text expresses the meaning; asking, or demanding, in a court of justice is a legal term, and involves a charge.

12. *to the spoiling*] Lit. "bereavement to my soul," *i.e.* I am left alone, like an orphan, without a helper, friend, or advocate. Such was David's position in his flight, separated from his wife, his friend Jonathan, and his parents. This isolation is a strong appeal to Him who is a Father to the fatherless, and will not leave His people (ὀρφανούς) orphans. Cf. John xiv. 18.

13. *when they were sick*] This may express the Psalmist's ready sympathy with his friends in their affliction; but the words have a peculiar force and propriety if referred to his feeling for Saul, labouring under the most terrible of all maladies; cf. 1 S. xvi. 14, xviii. 10; Job xxx. 25.

with fasting] Fasting is conjoined with prayer in numberless passages, both as preparing the spirit for near communion with God, and as expressing grief and sympathy.

my prayer returned] The exact meaning of this expression is somewhat doubtful. The prayer goes forth from the bosom, in tender sighs or deep groans, but its effect depends on the inner state of those on whose behalf it is offered: if they are fit objects of God's favour it brings a blessing upon them; if not, it is lost so far as regards them; but inasmuch as it cannot be ineffectual it comes back to the offerer, bringing to him an assurance of spiritual union with God. This seems to be the meaning of other passages of similar character; see Matt. x. 13; Luke x. 6. Some interpreters hold that the verse simply describes the position of an earnest supplicant, seated on the ground, his head bent down, pouring the prayers into the bosom, unheard by any save God. Thus Elijah, 1 K. xviii. 42.

14. *I behaved myself*] The margin has "walked," but the text gives the sense.

I bowed down heavily] With downcast head and drooping gait, or with an even more forcible meaning, "lying down in the dust," as one who mourns his nearest and dearest; such were ever the outward demonstrations of woe in the East. cf. Job ii. 13.

mother] The climax should be noted, friend, brother, mother.

15. *adversity*] Or, **in my fall.** The word implies a sudden slip and overthrow, an expression which applies with perfect propriety to David's position when Saul became his enemy; see 1 S. xviii. 29.

the abjects] Or, "slanderers." The meaning of the original word, which occurs nowhere else, is doubtful. It appears to denote smiters, sc. with the tongue. Jer. percutientes; LXX. μάστιγες; Symm. πλῆκται.

and I knew it not] Or, "whom I knew not;" persons beneath my notice; cf. Ps. ci. 4. Some commentators suppose it to mean "although I was conscious of no sin," referring to *v.* 11; but the former meaning suits the context, and is more natural.

they did tear] Job xvi. 9, where the same word occurs, as here, not followed by an objective case.

16. *hypocritical mockers*] The expression in the original is very peculiar. Literally, "profane jesters (or railers) of cakes," *i. e.* men who make profane jests for the sake of a cake. It describes a class of parasites well known to the classical reader, *gnathones*, currying favour by profane or licentious jests, and

on? rescue my soul from their destructions, † my darling from the lions.

18 [c] I will give thee thanks in the great congregation: I will praise thee among † much people.

19 Let not them that are mine enemies † wrongfully rejoice over me: *neither* let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause.

20 For they speak not peace: but they devise deceitful matters against *them that are* quiet in the land.

21 Yea, they opened their mouth wide against me, *and* said, Aha, aha, our eye hath seen *it*.

22 *This* thou hast seen, O LORD: keep not silence: O Lord, be not far from me.

23 Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment, *even* unto my cause, my God and my Lord.

24 Judge me, O LORD my God, according to thy righteousness; and let them not rejoice over me.

25 Let them not say in their hearts, † Ah, so would we have it: let them not say, We have swallowed him up.

26 Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at mine hurt: let them be clothed with shame and dishonour that magnify *themselves* against me.

27 Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour † my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.

28 And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness *and* of thy praise all the day long.

† Heb. *my only one.*
[c] Ps. 40. 9, 10. & 111. 1.
† Heb. *strong.*
† Heb. *falsely.*
† Heb. *Ah,ah,our soul.*
† Heb. *my righteousness.*

PSALM XXXVI.

1 *The grievous estate of the wicked.* 5 *The excellency of God's mercy.* 10 *David prayeth for favour to God's children.*

To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of David the servant of the LORD.

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rewarded by a share of their patron's dainties. David had doubtless frequently been the object of such gibes at the table of Saul, after his loss of favour.

gnashed, &c.] Cf. xxxvii. 12; Job xvi. 9.

17. *my darling*] See note on Ps. xxii. 20.

18. *much people*] The marg. "strong" is accurate; but a strong people means "numerous," and is equivalent to "great" in the preceding clause; thus Gen. xviii. 18.

19. *wrongfully*] The true sense of "falsely:" the marginal amendment is unnecessary. The rejoicing is not feigned, but it is without just cause; thus Ps. xxxviii. 19.

wink with the eye] A gesture of mockery and mutual concert between the Psalmist's enemies; cf. Prov. vi. 13, x. 10.

21. *opened their mouth*] Either, as Hupfeld takes it, like wild beasts ready to devour the prey; cf. Ps. xxii. 13; or, more probably, with scornful laughter.

24. Cf. Ps. xxvi. 1.

25. *so would we have it*] This is the true meaning of the exclamation, "ah, ah, our soul," *i.e.* our desire, just what we desired; see Ps. xxvii. 12.

We have swallowed him up] 2 S. xvii. 16, "lest the king be swallowed up." The same Hebrew word is used in that passage. See the description of David's enemies, Ps. v. 9, and cf. Prov. i. 12.

26. *be clothed*] A metaphor commonly used of dignity, glory, light, righteousness; here, with bitter sarcasm, of shame and dishonour; cf. Job viii. 22; Ps. cix. 18, 29.

27. *which hath pleasure*] Who hath delight in; a word specially characteristic of David; see note on Ps. xli. 11.

prosperity] Lit. "peace," including safety and prosperity.

On the general question how the bitter imprecations, which especially characterize the psalms written during the period of David's flight from the court of Saul, can be reconciled with the spirit of religion, see Introduction, p. 160.

PSALM XXXVI.

A psalm most remarkable for the vividness with which it portrays the contrast between evil and good; without any intermediate stage the Psalmist passes (*v.* 5) from the workings of wickedness in the heart of the wicked to the attributes of Jehovah, and the abundant blessedness of His people.

The contemplative character of the psalm, the absence of personal allusions, and the quiet confidence in the triumph of the righteous, point to a later period in David's life than that to which the preceding psalms have been referred; it may have been composed at Jerusalem, either before the king's great fall, or more probably towards the close of his reign.

THE transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, *that there is* no fear of God before his eyes.

2 For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, † until his iniquity be found to be hateful.

† Heb. *to find his iniquity to hate.*

3 The words of his mouth *are* iniquity and deceit: he hath left off to be wise, *and* to do good.

4 He deviseth ‖ mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself in a way *that is* not good; he abhorreth not evil.

‖ Or, *vanity.*

5 [a] Thy mercy, O LORD, *is* in the heavens; *and* thy faithfulness *reacheth* unto the clouds.

[a] Ps. 57. 10. & 108. 4.

6 Thy righteousness *is* like † the great mountains; thy judgments *are* a great deep: O LORD, thou preservest man and beast.

† Heb. *the mountains of God.*

7 How † excellent *is* thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

† Heb. *precious.*

8 They shall be † abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.

† Heb. *watered.*

There are three strophes of four, five, and three verses each: the last breaks off abruptly with the overthrow of the wicked.

1. *within my heart*] Or, "within his heart." The construction of the first verse is obscure, but presents a singularly striking figure if we adopt what seems on the whole the most satisfactory explanation. The voice of transgression (speaks) to the wicked within his heart; *i.e.* in the heart of the wicked there is a voice of crime. Crime is personified as dwelling in the heart of the wicked, and as uttering suggestions, to which he listens as to an oracle. This involves a slight change in the present text, for which substantial reasons are adduced (see Note below). Another translation is proposed, which gives the same general sense, though in a less distinct and striking form: "What vice utters to the wicked is well known to my heart." Del. The Psalmist hears within his own heart the echo of the suggestions which sin whispers oracularly to the wicked; this explains to him how it is that a man can sin so fearlessly: he who listens to it loses altogether the sense of God's Presence and the fear of His judgments.

2. Another verse presenting great difficulties of construction, but a clear strong sense however it is taken. On the whole the following translation seems the most natural. "For it (*i.e.* crime speaking in the man's heart) makes all smooth to him in his own eyes, *so as not* to find his sin, to hate it." The man under the influence of that spirit of evil loses all sense of guilt and danger, cannot find his sin, much less feel its hatefulness. Ewald gives an ingenious but less probable rendering: "In his eyes it is flattering (he thinks it a fine thing, it gives him satisfaction) to find his iniquity (to devise and think out a crime), and to hate," to cultivate hatred instead of love.

4. *mischief*] **Iniquity**, better than "vanity," as in the margin. The same word is used in the passage of Micah ii. 1, which corresponds exactly with this, and is probably taken from it.

he abhorreth not] This seems at first sight almost an anticlimax; it is, however, very forcible, if we refer it to the action of the secret oracle, which gradually destroys all sense of the evil of sin: the last stage is utter apathy.

5. A burst of rapture: here is the voice of the true oracle: all the attributes of the Lord stand out at once before the eyes of God's servant, never more distinctly than when the workings of evil give intensity to his feelings.

6. *great mountains*] Or, "mountains of God;" God's creation, on which He has stamped the impress of His own majesty and grandeur. Such epithets as these shew how deeply the Hebrew felt the beauty and majesty of natural scenery: the mountains were to him an outward representation of the righteousness, deep rooted in the very essence of the Godhead, and towering over the earth in its manifestation.

a great deep] Unfathomable, which no human or created understanding can sound; cf. Rom. xi. 33.

thou preservest] One of the most touching characteristics of Hebrew poetry is the instantaneous transition from the contemplation of God's majesty and unapproachable essence to that of His providential care. Compare Pss. civ. and cxlv. 14—16; see also the last words in Jonah.

8. *fatness of thy house*] Not without a reference to the offerings in the sanctuary; nor can the Christian exclude the thought of that great Offering, the food and sustenance of the soul, which those offerings prefigured; cf. Jer. xxxi. 12—14. The word "house" proves that the psalm was not written during the exile, but not that it belongs to a later time than David's; see note on Ps. v. 7.

pleasures] Or, "delights." The Hebrew word suggests a paradisiacal state of bliss;

9 For with thee *is* the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.

10 O †continue thy lovingkindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart.

† Heb. *draw out at length.*

11 Let not the foot of pride come against me, and let not the hand of the wicked remove me.

12 There are the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast down, and shall not be able to rise.

"thy Edens," so to speak, watered by the river of life.

9. *fountain of life*] The source of all life, natural and spiritual, all that is promised in the Old Testament, and given by Christ; cf. Prov. xvi. 22; Jer. ii. 13; Joh. iv. 14, v. 26; Rev. xxii. 1.

in thy light] St John found here the central truth of his doctrinal system; see ch. i. 4. The true light can only be discerned by those who live in it. The believing soul lives in an element of light, which at once quickens and satisfies the spiritual faculty, whereby heaven and heavenly things are realized. This verse, as Delitzsch observes, is constantly in the mouth of the great thinkers, Augustine and Malebranche. Thus Plato teaches; to see the sun the eye must be ἡλιοειδής.

10. *continue*] Lit. "draw out," **prolong.**

11. *foot of pride*] This marks David's hand. Every psalm of his which speaks of danger points to the *pride* of his enemies, secret or open, as the source.

remove me] That is, drive me out of the land; the same word is used 2 K. xxi. 8. The prayer indicates the consciousness of danger from disaffected subjects. There may be a reference to Joab and his party.

12. *There*] The word is emphatic. The Psalmist sees, as a prophet, the very place of the overthrow: he realizes the future, and speaks of it as an accomplished fact.

NOTE on Psalm xxxvi. 1.

Instead of לִבִּי, "my heart," read לִבּוֹ, "his heart." This was certainly the reading of the LXX., Vulg., Jerome, and Syr., followed by the Arab., Æth. The Targum alone has "my heart," "wickedness saith to the sinner in my heart:" an unintelligible statement, for which, however, a transcriber was probably responsible; in the Antwerp Polyglott the reading is לִבּוֹ. De Rossi observes, "לִבּוֹ, cordis ejus, Kenn. 649, forte 36, mei 667, 867." He then notices the old versions, as above, and gives a list of critics who support the reading, Houbigant, Michaelis, Knapp, Schultz, Matt., Dath. With these nearly all modern critics agree, *e.g.* Ew., Hupf., Hitzig, and without any hesitation. Hitzig points out that ו is very frequently changed to י in the MSS., an observation which is of great importance in its bearing upon a far more serious question; see critical Note on Ps. xxii. 16. Delitzsch, Dr Kay, and the Bishop of Lincoln defend the Masoretic reading, which the bishop renders, "The oracle of sin to the wicked (is this)—in the secret of my heart."

PSALM XXXVII.

David persuadeth to patience and confidence in God, by the different estate of the godly and the wicked.

A Psalm of David.

FRET [a] not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.

[a] Prov. 23. 17. & 24. 1.

Psalm xxxvii.

This is one of the alphabetic psalms, and, like all others of that class, it is wholly didactic. The style is calm, grave and methodical; there is nothing of lyrical movement; no passion; no allusion to personal circumstances; it is altogether the work of a teacher of great experience and high authority, having no object but the edification of the people. It is attributed in the inscription to David; nor is it improbable that towards the end of his life (see *v.* 25) he may have composed this among other psalms for the use of his subjects: the language and whole tone of the composition are certainly unlike other Davidic psalms, but the difference may be to some extent accounted for by the subject-matter, and by the object of the writer.

The true object of the whole psalm is to warn the hearer against the temptation to repine at the success of the ungodly. It proceeds throughout on the principle of certain and complete retribution. The real peace, prosperity, deliverance, and salvation of the righteous are absolutely certain; so also the ruin and destruction of the wicked. Some expressions point to a future state; see *vv.* 18, 27, 29, 37; but the point of view is altogether that of the law. It is the teaching of the old dispensation, which nowhere stands

2 For they shall soon be cut down
like the grass, and wither as the green
herb.

3 Trust in the LORD, and do good;
so shalt thou dwell in the land, and
† verily thou shalt be fed.

† Heb. *in truth, or, stableness.*

4 Delight thyself also in the LORD;
and he shall give thee the desires of
thine heart.

† Heb. *Roll thy way upon the LORD.* [b] Prov. 16. 3. Matt. 6. 25. 1 Pet. 5. 7.

5 † [b] Commit thy way unto the
LORD; trust also in him; and he shall
bring *it* to pass.

6 And he shall bring forth thy
righteousness as the light, and thy
judgment as the noonday.

† Heb. *Be silent to the LORD.*

7 † Rest in the LORD, and wait
patiently for him: fret not thyself
because of him who prospereth in his
way, because of the man who bring-
eth wicked devices to pass.

8 Cease from anger, and forsake
wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to
do evil.

9 For evildoers shall be cut off:
but those that wait upon the LORD,
they shall inherit the earth.

10 For yet a little while, and the
wicked *shall* not *be:* yea, thou shalt
diligently consider his place, and it
shall not *be.*

11 [c] But the meek shall inherit the [c] Matt. 5. 5.
earth; and shall delight themselves in
the abundance of peace.

12 The wicked ‖ plotteth against ‖ Or, *practiseth.*
the just, and gnasheth upon him with
his teeth.

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out more distinct, more complete, or in a nobler and more attractive form. It may be regarded as the authoritative statement of the great teacher of the nation touching the questions raised in the book of Job, with which the writer was evidently familiar: see notes on 1, 2, 4, 10, 13, 35, 36, 38. Still it leaves the real problem of life but very partially solved, and suggests difficulties which could only be removed by Him, Who brought life and immortality to light.

1. *Fret not thyself*] The exhortation proves the depth and extent of this natural feeling. The expression in the original is very forcible: do not work thyself into heat; look coolly upon the facts; the heat will otherwise take the form of envy, the most perilous of all temptations; cf. Prov. xxiv. 19, and the expression of Job's grief and amazement, xxi. 6 ff.

2. *cut down*] Job xiv. 2; see, too, the deliberate judgment of Job himself, xxvii. 13—23.

3. *so shalt thou dwell*] Or, **dwell in the land**; this is at once an exhortation and promise, as in *v.* 27; cf. Deut. xxxiii. 28; Prov. ii. 21; see also Lev. xxvi. 3—10.

verily thou shalt be fed] Lit. "feed truth," of which two interpretations are suggested, (1) feed securely, taking truth in the common sense of stability, or security; and (2) "practise truth," cultivate faithfulness; a good sense, and fully justified by Hebrew usage; thus Hupf., Hitz. Aquila has *νέμου πίστιν.*

4. *Delight thyself*] A very forcible word, which, however, inadequately expresses the feeling of blessedness and rapture in the original. The true counterpoise to envy of the temporal prosperity of the wicked is the inward intensity of joy in communion with God; compare Phil. iv. 4; Job xxii. 26; Isai. lviii. 14.

5. *Commit*] Lit. as in the margin, "roll;" *i.e.* cast thyself altogether without hesitation, by a natural spontaneous movement of heart and soul; thus Prov. xvi. 3; see note on Ps. xxii. 8.

bring it to pass] Lit. "will do," a pregnant expression, implying complete accomplishment of His purpose; so in Ps. xxii. 31, lii. 9.

7. *Rest*] Or, as in the margin, "be silent," the silence of perfect resignation and acquiescence.

8. *in any wise*] Lit. "only to do evil;" the expression is elliptical, and means fret not thyself, since that can only lead thee to do evil; *i. e.* to murmuring against God, envy of man, or even dishonest acts which will class thee with the evildoers.

9. *For evildoers*] Not merely a general axiom, but a special warning; envy leads to evildoing, and evildoing to destruction.

wait upon the LORD] Patiently abide the time of His manifestation. Cf. Prov. ii. 21, 22.

10. *his place*] Job vii. 10.

and it shall not be] Or, "but he is not;" not the least trace of him shall remain; cf. Job viii. 18, 22.

11. This connection between meekness, a humble, patient and gentle character, and earthly prosperity, is justified by our Lord's adoption of the saying in the beginning of the sermon on the mount. It represents a general law, leaving untouched the exceptions, which can only be dealt with hereafter.

12. *plotteth*] A good translation; cf. Ps. xxxi. 13, where A.V. has "devised." The marginal amendment is unnecessary.

[d] Ps. 2. 4.

13 [d] The Lord shall laugh at him: for he seeth that his day is coming.

14 The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, *and* to slay [†] such as be of upright conversation.

[†] Heb. *the upright of way.*

15 Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken.

16 A little that a righteous man hath *is* better than the riches of many wicked.

17 For the arms of the wicked shall be broken: but the LORD upholdeth the righteous.

18 The LORD knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be for ever.

19 They shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.

20 But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD *shall be* as [†] the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.

[†] Heb. *the preciousness of lambs.*

21 The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth.

22 For *such as be* blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and *they that be* cursed of him shall be cut off.

23 The steps of a *good* man are [‖] ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.

[‖] Or, *established.*

24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth *him with* his hand.

25 I have been young, and *now*

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13. *laugh*] Cf. ii. 4. The word expresses the utter futility and madness of devices against God's servant.

his day] See Job xviii. 20; Jer. l. 27, 31; Obad. 12. The day in which a man is shewn as he is, and receives his own deserts, is in the fullest sense his own true day. Whatever the result may be, it is the just and necessary consequence of his own acts. Compare "his own place," Acts i. 25.

18. *knoweth the days*] Ps. i. 6, xxxi. 15.

20. *fat of lambs*] This translation is adopted by many commentators ancient and modern, and presents a forcible figure, since the fat of lambs was wholly consumed upon the altar in the daily sacrifice. There is, however, somewhat incongruous in the simile; the lamb, and especially its fat, would suggest thoughts of acceptance, rather than of destruction; and, on the whole, it is more probable (Hupf. says "indubitable," ohne Zweifel) that the original words mean, "the preciousness of fields," *i.e.* the flowers of the field, an image of frequent occurrence both in the Old and New Testament; see above *v.* 2, and compare Matt. vi. 30; Jam. i. 11.

21. *borroweth*] This implies both that the wicked is reduced to poverty, compelled to borrow, and unable to discharge his obligations, and that the dishonesty which caused his ruin continues to shew itself.

sheweth mercy] A proof that he is, and that he deserves to be, prosperous. This verse expresses a deep and true moral aspect both of poverty and prosperity, the one, as a punishment for sin, involves an incapacity of discharging obligations; the other, as a reward of virtue, enables a man to confer benefits, and to be a blessing to his fellows; cf. Deut. xv. 6, xxviii. 12. This explanation of the text is given by Calvin, and well defended by Hupfeld. The antithesis between "borroweth" and "sheweth mercy" stands out more distinctly in the original, where each is expressed by a single word: the former implying cleaving, a helpless dependence on the lender; the latter a free, generous, and gracious distribution of benefits.

giveth] This completes the antithesis, since it implies that no return is exacted or expected.

22. *For*] This verse shews how it is that the wicked and the righteous are in the position described in the preceding: the connection of thought is apt to be overlooked.

23. *ordered*] The marg. "established" is correct. The meaning is that God secures the just man from falling, He strengthens his feet.

a...man] The word "good" is not needed; by "man" the Psalmist understands man as he should be, and as he is when strengthened by the Lord.

he delighteth] *i.e.* God approves his way.

24. *fall*] *i.e.* into some misfortune; the idea of falling into a sin of error or infirmity may be included, but does not appear to be the direct object of the assurance.

utterly cast down] Or, "be prostrated," lit. "stretched out his full length." There may be a partial fall or stumble, but not utter prostration; see especially 2 Cor. iv. 9; and cf. Prov. xxiv. 16.

25. *now am old*] The assertion implies that though for a season the righteous may

am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

† Heb. *all the day.*

26 *He is* †ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed *is* blessed.

27 Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell for evermore.

28 For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.

29 The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever.

30 The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment.

‖ Or, *goings.*

31 The law of his God *is* in his heart; none of his ‖steps shall slide.

32 The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him.

33 The LORD will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged.

34 Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see *it.*

‖ Or, *a green tree that groweth in his own soil.*

35 I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like ‖a green bay tree.

36 Yet he passed away, and, lo, he *was* not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.

37 Mark the perfect *man*, and behold the upright: for the end of *that* man *is* peace.

38 But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off.

39 But the salvation of the righteous *is* of the LORD: *he is* their strength in the time of trouble.

40 And the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him.

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suffer, yet he cannot be utterly forsaken; nor can the truth of the observation, as a general rule, be disproved, even under a dispensation which reserves the rectification of apparent or real inequalities to a future state.

26. This implies that the good man is never reduced to such straits as to be unable to help others: a statement which the history of great saints abundantly confirms; see especially 2 Cor. iv. 8—12 and viii. 2.

27. *dwell for evermore*] This is the best comment on *v.* 3, and proves that the command involves a promise.

28. See Note below.

33. This promise refers to two ways in which the wicked persecutes the just, by force and by wrong judgment: God will not leave him under the power of the wicked, nor ratify the condemnation pronounced by an ignorant or unrighteous judge.

35. *like a green bay tree*] The marg. brings out the true meaning of the Hebrew. The wicked man is described as spreading himself out with a rank luxuriance like an "indigenous tree," or rather "shrub," flourishing in its native soil. The contrast between this description and that of the just man in the first psalm is striking; and the account given there in the note on *v.* 3 may suggest that the oleander, a native shrub with bright flowers but no fruit, abundance of leaves but poisonous, growing wild, useless to man, and untended, may have been here in the Psalmist's mind. Compare our Lord's words, Matt. xv. 13, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not *planted* shall be rooted up;" see also Job xviii. 16—18.

36. Compare Job xx. 5. The coincidences between the whole of this psalm and the book of Job are remarkable, the more so since the point of view is very different: that is the production of an anxious and perplexed inquirer; this of one who has learned, and has the mission to teach, the truth.

37. *the end of that man is peace*] This does not explicitly declare, but it suggests, the promise of an hereafter. "The righteous hath hope in his death." The two assurances are incompatible with belief in personal annihilation. "The end" means "the hereafter," "the future condition," the state reserved for a man. In this and in the next verse it may possibly include a man's posterity, but far more naturally refers to the ultimate result of his acts; to the righteous it is eternal peace; to the unrighteous "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord;" 2 Thess. i. 9: cf. Ps. xcii. 7.

38. *the end*] The French, "l'avenir," comes nearest to the Hebrew idiom. Ewald takes "nachwelt," with the same meaning. "Posterity" (Per.) or "issue" (Kay) expresses very incompletely the force of the Hebrew. Ges. extrema sors alicujus. Thus Job viii. 7, xlii. 12; Jer. l. 12, where the A.V. has "the hindermost," better, "the last state."

NOTE on PSALM XXXVII. 28.

The letter ע is not represented: it may be assumed that a word beginning with this letter has been accidentally omitted. Such a word may be easily supplied by conjecture; thus Ewald suggests עֹשֵׂי טוֹב, doers of good. The ancient versions, however, had a different word, which the LXX. render ἄνομοι, according to the reading of the Codex Alex. Instead of יִשְׁמְרוּ, they must have read יִשְׁמְדוּ, will be cut off: LXX., Cod. Alex., ἐκδιωχθήσονται, Sym. ἐξαρθήσονται (which Field, 'Hexapla,' refers to the last word in the clause): Hupfeld, therefore, and Ewald consider that the true reading is עַוָּלִים יִשְׁמְדוּ, "sinners shall be cut off."

PSALM XXXVIII.

David moveth God to take compassion of his pitiful case.

A Psalm of David, to bring to remembrance.

O LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath: neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.

2 For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore.

3 *There is* no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither *is there any* †rest in my bones because of my sin. † Heb. *peace*, or, *health.*

4 For mine iniquities are gone over

PSALM XXXVIII.

Among the penitential psalms none bear deeper marks of a season of utter prostration of heart and spirit, of a combination of the most cruel trials, mental and bodily; the strain is continued without intermission to the end of the 41st psalm, which closes the first book of psalms. The history of David leaves us no doubt as to the time and circumstances under which it was composed. It must have been some time after the complete awakening of his conscience to the deadly guilt contracted by Uriah's death, when the results of that act were manifested in the fearful disorders of his family, polluted by incest and murder; in the estrangement of his dearest friends and nearest kinsmen; in the triumph of malicious and slanderous enemies; in agonies of mind, accompanied and exaggerated by a terrible malady, of which the symptoms, elsewhere noted, are described most vividly in this psalm, the flesh diseased, the bones racked, the loins filled with fierce pain, the heart panting, strength failing, the eye darkened as with the shadow of death; all attributed by the Psalmist himself to his own sin. Yet withal there is a sense of inward communion. David knows that the hand which presses on him is for chastisement, and that the Lord hears his groaning; his confession and contrition are combined with hope; he desires to be nearer God, and sums up all with calling upon the Lord as his salvation.

All these things point to the period just preceding the revolt of Absalom. At that time there are indications that David was prostrate by disease, which gave full scope to the machinations of his son and his abettors; from which he recovered only to witness their success.

There is a close resemblance between this, as, indeed, all other penitential psalms, and the book of Job, sufficient to prove that one of the two writers was familiar with the other (see Introduction to Job, p. 15); though the similarity of position might partly account for the coincidences.

The psalm is frequently referred to in the New Testament. Its application to the Saviour, of whom David was a type in so many points, in none more so than in suffering, is natural; but though prophetical in the sense that the words came from David's heart under the influence which made them true exponents of feelings which reached their highest intensity in the representative of fallen man, the psalm is not predictive, it speaks of the present and actual, not of the future and ideal; it belongs to a man not only of sorrow but of sin; of sin not merely imputed but committed; and as such is adopted without modification by conscience-smitten sinners, even while they feel that Christ's acceptance of the burden, and participation of the agonies, assures them of the help which David sought, and gives them a certainty of deliverance.

There are three principal divisions, 1—8, 9—15, 16—22: each with strophes of two verses.

to bring to remembrance] This inscription occurs again in Ps. lxx. The main purport of both psalms is to bring David's suffering and repentance before God; but the term has a close connection with the offering of incense, the symbol of earnest and acceptable prayer. Cf. Rev. viii. 4.

2. *stick fast...presseth me sore*] Or, "Thine arrows have fallen on me, and Thy hand falleth heavily upon me." In the original the same word is used in both clauses: the arrows of God's wrath fell as from a great height, inflicting severe wounds, and then God's hand itself fell upon him, pressing him down to the earth. Compare Job vi. 4.

3. *rest*] Or, as in the margin, "peace:" the bones are racked with incessant pains.

mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.

5 My wounds stink *and* are corrupt because of my foolishness.

† Heb. *wried.*

6 I am †troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long.

7 For my loins are filled with a loathsome *disease:* and *there is* no soundness in my flesh.

8 I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart.

9 Lord, all my desire *is* before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee.

10 My heart panteth, my strength faileth me: as for the light of mine eyes, it also †is gone from me.

† Heb. is *not with me.*

11 My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my †sore; and ‖my kinsmen stand afar off.

† Heb. *stroke.* ‖ Or, *my neighbours.*

12 They also that seek after my life lay snares *for me:* and they that seek my hurt speak mischievous things, and imagine deceits all the day long.

13 But I, as a deaf *man*, heard not; and *I was* as a dumb man *that* openeth not his mouth.

14 Thus I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth *are* no reproofs.

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of my sin] The immediate cause of suffering is the infliction, the ultimate cause is the sin which incurred wrath. The recognition of sin as the alone cause of the infliction is a sufficient proof that this psalm was not written by Jeremiah, to whom it is attributed by some critics (*e.g.* Hitzig). Jeremiah never attributes his great suffering to his personal guilt.

4. *gone over mine head*] *i.e.* overwhelming him like a flood; Ps. cxxiv. 4, 5. See also xviii. 4 and 16.

5. The sin works inwardly like poison; it produces swellings which burst. The expression may possibly be figurative, denoting extreme mental anguish; but the symptoms are so accurately described as to leave little doubt that David was at the time smitten with a disease common in all ages in the East. Compare the account of Hezekiah's malady, Isai. xxxviii. 21.

6. *troubled*] The margin has "wried," which gives the true sense, *i.e.* bent, twisted by violent spasms.

bowed down] Both this word and that rendered "go" in the next clause describe the prostration and the slow uncertain movements of a heavily afflicted mourner; cf. Ps. xxxv. 14.

7. *loins*] Or, "kidneys." The *disease* is described by a word which means burning: a violent inflammatory action on the kidneys seems too specific for mere metaphor, though doubtless the Psalmist realized in such symptoms a type of the spiritual disease which consumed the soul.

8. *feeble*] The original is far more precise; it speaks of deadly chill, corpse-like cold, such as alternates with fever fits. The last clause is not easy to translate; it means, I roar from the moaning of my heart; both words, "roar" and "moaning," belong properly to wild beasts: the roaring is, so to speak, an echo of the heart's moaning; cf. Ps. xxii. 1.

9. The first indication of hope in this psalm, but one which, though it may sound faint, is yet full of faith, and prepares for *v.* 15.

groaning] Or, **sighing.**

10. *panteth*] The word is well chosen, and expresses the force of the original, which is singularly precise and graphic; it means, "goes round," *i.e.* "palpitates violently," as in severe attacks of fever.

the light of mine eyes] The failure of sight is noted by Job, xvii. 7, as one of the last and most distressing results of his terrible disease. See also Ps. vi. 7, xiii. 3.

11. *sore*] Better, as in the margin, "stroke:" the word means specially a blow inflicted in wrath. It is the word used in Isai. liii. 4, 8.

kinsmen] This rendering is probably correct, but misses the antithesis, "my near ones stood afar off." The word literally means "near ones," near either in place, friendship, or affinity. See Luke xxiii. 49.

12. This is the first intimation in the psalm that David's sufferings are connected with the machinations of his enemies. His prostration of strength, and inability for a season to discharge his kingly duties, probably suggested to Absalom and his abettors the devices described in 2 S. xv. 1—6, and gave them an opportunity of carrying them on without let or hindrance.

speak mischievous things] Or, **malice**; lit. "ruin," "destruction" (see note on Ps. v. 9). David's enemies doubtless represented the disease not only as a chastisement, but as a proof that God had abandoned him to destruction for his great crime. See Ps. xli. 6—8.

13. *a deaf man*, &c.] The Psalmist probably refers to David's silence while the con-

15 For ‖in thee, O LORD, do I hope: thou wilt ‖hear, O Lord my God.

16 For I said, *Hear me*, lest *otherwise* they should rejoice over me: when my foot slippeth, they magnify *themselves* against me.

17 For I *am* ready †to halt, and my sorrow *is* continually before me.

18 For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin.

19 But mine enemies †*are* lively, *and* they are strong: and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied.

20 They also that render evil for good are mine adversaries; because I follow *the thing that* good *is*.

21 Forsake me not, O LORD: O my God, be not far from me.

22 Make haste †to help me, O Lord my salvation.

‖ Or, *thee do I wait for.* ‖ Or, *answer.*

† Heb. *for halting.*

† Heb. being *living, and strong.*

† Heb. *for my help.*

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spiracy was proceeding. The typical reference to our Lord is obvious; compare Isai. liii. 7.

14. *no reproofs*] The word is judicial, and means **pleadings**, whether to support, or, as here, to rebut a charge. (LXX. ἐλεγμοί: Vulg. redargutiones; cf. Job xxiii. 4, A. V. "arguments.") David represents himself as a criminal, who will not even attempt to defend himself, relying altogether on the justice and wisdom of the judge. The silence does not therefore prove the consciousness of guilt, on the contrary, it assumes innocence so far as regards the slanders of his enemies.

15. *thou wilt hear*] Or, "answer;" here specially in the sense, "Thou wilt make answer for me, take my cause in hand, and be my advocate;" cf. xxxv. 1, and notes on Job xvi. 19—21.

16. *Hear me*] These words, and "otherwise," are inserted by our translators, and shew that they connected this verse closely with the preceding. This is probably correct, but another connection of thought is possible, and has been well defended. David may be giving the reason for his silence. He feared lest by some injudicious answer he might give occasion to his enemies, who had already triumphed when he made a false step; see Ps. xxxix. 1, 2.

17. *ready to halt*] *i.e.* in a position where a fall is imminent, and can only be prevented by the interposition of God; cf. Ps. xxxv. 15. See Job xii. 5.

sorrow] Not inner grief, but **affliction**. David cannot forget for one moment the suffering which he endures, the result of God's anger and of his own sin.

18. *For*] This is the fourth clause beginning with the same conjunction. This seems to connect each and all with David's abstaining from self-justification: (1) because God hears him; (2) because he may give further occasion to his enemies; (3) because he feels his great danger and is conscious of sin; and (4) because he has no course open but confession and contrition.

19. *lively*] If the reading is correct the sense of the clause is that given in the margin, "my enemies are strong, being full of life." Jerome, "viventes confortati sunt." It is probable, however, that one word is slightly altered, and that the meaning is "they who are my enemies without cause are strong," *i.e.* numerous; cf. Ps. iii. 1. See Note below.

20. The construction does not quite correspond to the original, **and, requiting evil for good, they hate me, because I follow good.**

22. *O Lord my salvation*] Note the progressive development of feeling (as *vv.* 1, 9, 15, and 22); first, prayer, then confidence in God's knowledge, then hope, then assurance of salvation in God. Cf. Ex. xv. 2; Ps. xxiv. 5, xxvii. 1; Isai. xii. 2, &c.

NOTE on PSALM XXXVIII. 19.

For חיים Houbigant, Hitzig, Hupfeld, and Delitzsch would read חנם. They consider it doubtful whether חיים can mean "full of life;" see, however, Exod. i. 19, where חיות has this sense, yet with a very different bearing.

PSALM XXXIX.

1 *David's care of his thoughts.* 4 *The consideration of the brevity and vanity of life,* 7 *the reverence of God's judgments,* 10 *and prayer, are his bridles of impatiency.*

To the chief Musician, *even* to [a]Jeduthun, A Psalm of David.

[a] 1 Chron. 25. 1.

I SAID, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my

PSALM XXXIX.

This psalm is closely connected with the preceding. It developes one leading thought, accounting for the silence which David had maintained when unjustly accused. That silence had doubtless attracted much attention, and given occasion to his enemies, and probably troubled or even alienated

tongue: I will keep † my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.

2 I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, *even* from good; and my sorrow was † stirred.

3 My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned: *then* spake I with my tongue,

4 LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it *is; that* I may know ‖ how frail I *am*.

5 Behold, thou hast made my days *as* an handbreadth; and mine age *is* as nothing before thee: verily every man † at his best state *is* altogether [b] vanity. Selah.

6 Surely every man walketh in † a vain shew: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up *riches*,

† Heb. *a bridle*, or, *muzzle for my mouth.*

† Heb. *troubled.*

‖ Or, *what time I have here.*

† Heb. *settled.*

[b] Ps. 62. 9. & 144. 4.

† Heb. *an image.*

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many of his friends. It had weighed also upon his own spirit, and during an interval of disquietude and mental struggle produced feelings which find expression in this composition, so pathetic and solemn that it has been selected, together with the 90th, by our Church for the Burial Service.

Ewald, who regards this as the most beautiful of all elegies in the Psalter, points out the close resemblance to the book of Job.

After one introductory verse the psalm is divided into six strophes, each of two verses: the refrain at *vv.* 5, 11 is marked by Selah.

Jeduthun] One of the three chief musicians, or teachers of the Levitical chorus; see the marginal reference. The other two were Asaph and Heman. Two other psalms bear the name of Jeduthun, whose special connection with David is indicated by his official title, "the king's seer;" 2 Chro. xxxv. 15: he appears, from 1 Chro. xv. 17—19, to have been previously named Ethan.

1. *I said*] The reference to Ps. xxxviii. 13, &c. is unmistakeable. David resolved not to speak while the wicked were present, feeling that he might give way to the temptation of murmuring, and that they would triumph over any hasty or imprudent words, and use them as means for his destruction. This resolution, however, was intimately connected with his consciousness of sin, and the feeling that his affliction came from God; 8—11.

sin not with my tongue] Cf. Job ii. 10.

bridle] Or, **muzzle**, as in the margin. Cf. Ps. cxli. 3; James iii. 2.

2. *with silence*] The word includes the idea of submission, dumb in silent submission; thus Ps. iv. 4.

even from good] The phrase is peculiar and somewhat obscure. The rendering of our Prayer-book version, "even from good words," affords a good sense; David abstained altogether from speaking lest, together with good words, hasty and wrong ones might escape his lips; but the construction is doubtful: see Note below.

3. This verse describes the mental struggle and its effects. Silence was impossible, the heart burnt, the conflicting thoughts burst out in flame, and so at last the Psalmist speaks, not, however, to his adversaries but to God. The rest of the psalm tells us what he said. Cf. Job xxxii. 18, 19; Jer. xx. 9.

4. *make me to know*] *i.e.* know so as to apply the well-known truth to my heart; to realize the bearings, as well as the fact, of the shortness and uncertainty of life. Cf. Ps. xc. 12. The last clause is better rendered in the text than in the margin: what David wishes to know is, not what time he has to live, but how frail, how short-lived he is; and to keep that in mind as a preservative from presumption. Hupfeld questions this meaning of the word in our text, but he suggests a reading which presents the same sense (quantilli sim ævi: sc. חלד for חדל). Gesenius accepts and defends the present reading.

5. *Behold*] An exclamation of wonder; as though in answer to his prayer a sudden conviction, deeper and more practical than heretofore, had come upon him. Compare, for the phrase "handbreath," Matt. vi. 27.

at his best state] This gives the sense; literally as in the margin "settled," that is, every man, however settled his position may be, is altogether a vain breath. Cf. Pss. lxii. 9, lxxviii. 39, &c.

6. *in a vain shew*] Or, "as a shadow," lit. "image;" a shadowy outline, a mere unsubstantial form, or phantom; cf. Ps. lxxiii. 20. In other passages "shadow" is generally used, *e.g.* Job xiv. 2, Ps. cxliv. 4. Thus Pindar, σκιᾶς ὄναρ ἄνθρωποι; and Horace, Pulvis et umbra sumus.

they are disquieted in vain] The original is stronger, **they make a loud noise** (like that of many waters or a large assembly) **about nothing**. Their existence is full of noise but in itself mere nothingness. The two clauses together express the emptiness of the outer show and of the noisy turmoil of life.

riches] A word supplied by our translators, but the Psalmist probably speaks of "corn;" the farmer heaps up the wheat-sheaves, but a robber, or an oppressor, or his child may gather them into the garner. See

and knoweth not who shall gather them.

7 And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope *is* in thee.

8 Deliver me from all my transgressions: make me not the reproach of the foolish.

9 I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst *it*.

10 Remove thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the † blow of thine hand.

† Heb. *conflict.*

11 When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest † his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man *is* vanity. Selah.

† Heb. *that which is to be desired in him, to melt away.*

12 Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: [c] for I *am* a stranger with thee, *and* a sojourner, as all my fathers *were*.

[c] Lev. 25. 23. 1 Chron. 29. 15. Ps. 119. 19. Hebr. 11. 13. 1 Pet. 2. 11.

13 O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more.

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the parable of the rich fool, Luke xii. 20, and cf. Ps. xlix. 10.

7. *And now*] This word marks a transition of thought. Now, taking all these things into consideration, what is the Psalmist's expectation?

my hope is in thee] Does this imply hope in a state after death? If not, the state of mind is one very hard to understand. The one thing David is sure of is that his life here is a mere nothing, a shadow, an empty sound; the hope must therefore have another object. The Psalmist does not openly declare what it was. He was not moved to reveal it: but here, as in numberless other passages, he leaves no alternative but utter disappointment, unless the hope in death is justified hereafter. Compare St Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 19, and Job xiii. 15, where see critical Note. David uses here the same word and construction which are there discussed. Ewald, who notes the general resemblance between this psalm and Job, holds that the point of view is different and higher in Job; but in this and in the following verse we have the result of deep reflection upon the thoughts suggested in that book.

8. *Deliver me*] The first thing David prays for is deliverance from the sin to which he attributes all his misery. He includes inward assurance of forgiveness, cleansing from the guilt, and deliverance from the power and penalty of sin. The word transgression is applied specially to such a breach of God's law as that which David had committed: see Ps. xxxii. 1.

9. *thou didst it*] The great word which the Psalmist has already used (xxii. 31) of God's saving work. Cf. 1 S. iii. 18; 2 S. xvi. 10; Job ii. 10.

10. *thy stroke*] See xxxviii. 11, and cf. Job xiii. 21.

blow] Lit. "conflict," or "quarrel;" but "blow" gives the true meaning of the Hebrew word, which occurs here only.

11. *with rebukes*] Cf. Ps. lxxx. 16.

his beauty] "Thou makest his beauty melt away as by the moth." Thou corrodest, as by a moth, his delight: lit. what he desires and delights in; the bona naturalia, health, strength, beauty. Cf. Job xiii. 28; Isai. l. 9.

surely every man is vanity] See *v.* 5; that is the keynote—a most melancholy one but for the suggested hope.

12. *a stranger with thee, and a sojourner*] The stranger is one who is merely a guest for a season, the sojourner one who lives as a client, under the protection and patronage of a prince or noble: neither has any right, or settled footing, in the land. The earth is not the home of man. An image which is at once humbling and suggestive of a sure hope. See marg. reff. and Eph. ii. 19.

my fathers] Compare David's own words, 1 Chro. xxix. 15, "for we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers."

13. This verse is full of reminiscences of Job, which must have been present to the Psalmist's mind. For the first clause, "O spare me," lit. look away from me, *i.e.* turn away Thy wrathful look, compare Job vii. 19, xiv. 6. In the second clause, "that I may recover strength," lit. that I may shine (a metaphor from the light of dawn breaking forth after darkness), is an expression which occurs in this sense only in Job ix. 27 (where A.V. "comfort myself") and x. 20, "that I may take comfort." The prayer for a respite from pain, restoration for a short season to a state of happiness, is quite compatible with such belief in an hereafter as was attainable in the absence of a positive revelation. In itself such respite would be a very little thing, but as a pledge or sign of the cessation of God's anger it was of infinite importance to the Psalmist.

be no more] Absolutely no more so far as regards earth and the things of earth, Job vii. 8, and xx. 9; but like Enoch, "*who was not* (the same word in Hebrew), for God took him." Gen. v. 24.

NOTE on PSALM XXXIX. 2.

מטוב implies privation of good; David's silence brought him no comfort; so Hupfeld. The rendering of the text is however justified by the common phrase מטוב עד רע, Gen. xxxi. 24; 2 S. xiii. 22.

PSALM XL.

1 *The benefit of confidence in God.* 6 *Obedience is the best sacrifice.* 11 *The sense of David's evils inflameth his prayer.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

† Heb. *In waiting I waited.*

† I WAITED patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

† Heb. *a pit of noise.*

2 He brought me up also out of † an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, *and* established my goings.

3 And he hath put a new song in my mouth, *even* praise unto our God: many shall see *it*, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.

4 Blessed *is* that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.

5 Many, O LORD my God, *are* thy wonderful works *which* thou hast done, and thy thoughts *which are* to us-ward: ‖ they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: *if* I would declare and speak *of them*, they are more than can be numbered.

‖ Or, *none can order them unto thee.*

6 [a] Sacrifice and offering thou didst

[a] Ps. 51.16. Isai. 1. 11. & 66. 3. Hos. 6. 6. Matt. 12. 7. Hebr. 10. 5.

PSALM XL.

This psalm belongs to the same cycle, and is immediately connected with the preceding: what the Psalmist there prayed for he now gives thanks for. It appears to have been written at an interval of comparative tranquillity, when David was raised out of the pit and felt his position secure. In the first part (1—5) the memory is haunted with the intense griefs of the past, but the patient waiting has been rewarded, the deliverance effected, and songs of thanksgiving flow freely. In the second (6—10) the source of those feelings is described. They are derived from the sense of obedience to the inner and to the written law, of hearty adhesion to the will and law of God, and of public recognition of God's gracious dealings. (11—17) Earnest prayers follow to the end; at first plaintive, indicating apprehension lest the relief should cease, an intense feeling of sin surrounding, grasping, bowing him down, taking light from the eye, and comfort from the heart; but they wind up with a full assurance of God's care, and a hope of speedy deliverance.

1. *I waited patiently*] The Hebrew idiom, "waiting I waited," forcibly expresses the intense feeling of expectation: I waited with my whole heart. Cf. Pss. xxvii. 14, and xxxvii. 7.

2. *an horrible pit*] Or, "a pit of destruction." The Hebrew word properly means "loud noise," "uproar," "crash." The association of the two ideas "pit" and "crash" is natural. It sets before us a warrior falling into a deep pit with crash of arms amid the shouts of enemies.

set my feet upon a rock] Cf. Ps. xxvii. 5.

established my goings] Or, "enabled me to step firmly." Cf. Ps. xxxvii. 23, and see xviii. 36.

3. *a new song*] See note on xxxiii. 3. Here it means a song expressing joy and thanksgiving for new mercies.

see it] *i.e.* the deliverance which gave occasion to the hymn. A comparison with Deut. xiii. 11 may, as Dr Kay suggests, indicate that the deliverance of which the Psalmist speaks was accompanied by a judgment inflicted on the transgressors. See Ps. lii. 6.

4. *respecteth not*] Or, "turneth not to:" the word is generally used of apostasy, turning to false gods. The word rendered "the proud" is rather peculiar, not occurring elsewhere in the plural; in the singular it is specially applied to Egypt, denoting a power which by loud boasts induces people to put their trust in it, and then fails them. The Psalmist, however, more probably alludes to Job ix. 13, where Rahab and his helpers are mentioned; see note. David may have pointed directly at Absalom and his *abettors*. See 2 S. xv. 1—6.

turn aside to lies] Literally, "apostates of falsehood," false lying apostates, either men who have forsaken the faith, or have broken their oaths of allegiance. This applies with peculiar force to such men as Ahithophel and other counsellors of Absalom.

5. *Many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works*] Job v. 9, ix. 10.

they cannot be reckoned, &c.] This translation expresses the sense of the original. The meaning is "they are innumerable," no one can set them forth in order when giving thanks to God. Thus Hupf., Kay. The LXX., Vulg.,

not desire; mine ears hast thou †opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.

† Heb. *digged.*

7 Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book *it is* written of me,

8 I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law *is* †within my heart.

† Heb. *in the midst of my bowels.*

9 I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest.

10 I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation.

11 Withhold not thou thy tender

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and commentators generally, "there is none like unto Thee." Cf. Ps. lxxxix. 6.

6. In this famous passage David expresses with singular beauty the great truth that all outward observances are valueless without obedience and a full concurrence of the will of man with the will of God. This had ever been recognized by the teachers of Israel, and had but a few years previously been declared by Samuel (see 1 S. xv. 22). It is repeated by David, Ps. li. 16, by Asaph, l. 8—15, and by the prophets, *e.g.* Isai. i. 11—17; Hos. vi. 6; Mic. vi. 6—8.

Sacrifice, &c.] Four kinds of offerings are named: two represent the conditions of *entering* into covenant with God, viz. sacrifice, the slaughter of a victim, and oblation, *mincha*, the fine flour with oil and frankincense presented at the same time on the altar. To these David contrasts the "opening of the ears." The words mean literally, "Thou hast digged ears to me" (Aq. ἔσκαψας); an expression however of which the exact meaning is disputed. It is held by many to refer to the custom of piercing a slave's ear in token of his intention to serve for ever: see Exod. xxi. 6 (where, however, a different word is used); Deut. xv. 17. A more natural and obvious interpretation is, that God has opened the Psalmist's ears, or, more accurately, made new ears for him, given him the faculty of receiving and understanding His law. (So it was probably taken by Sym. and the generality of the Greek Vss., κατεσκεύασάς μοι, or κατηρτίσω). The hearing ear, the legal equivalent to evangelical faith, is the first condition of inner communion with God, and as such presents a perfect antithesis to the outward form which merely represents the condition. The very remarkable rendering by the LXX. quoted in Hebrews x. 5, "A body thou hast prepared me," or "fitted for me," may be explained by supposing that the opening of the ear was regarded as equivalent to the consecration of all bodily faculties to God's service; this explanation satisfies either of the interpretations here given. It is not probable that the LXX. had a different reading.

burnt offering and sin offering] These are the legal conditions of *remaining* in a covenant state. To these the Psalmist opposes three points; (1) outward obedience, "Lo, I come;" (2) inner willingness; and (3) open expression of thanksgiving. The first clause may be rendered, "Lo I come with a rolled book written concerning me." The most probable interpretation is that the book is the book of the law, the Pentateuch: David means that by presenting himself with it he declares his intention to obey it perfectly: and though not certain, the most probable meaning is, that in the words "concerning me," he alludes more specially to the instructions touching the duties of a king in Deut. xvii. 14—20. The typical application to our Lord is obvious and very striking. As David presented himself before God in spirit with the book of the law describing his duties and rights, so the Saviour came with the word of God bearing witness to Him and expressing that will which He fulfilled. Our Authorized Version adopts a different punctuation, but gives the same general sense.

8. *within my heart*] Literally, as in the margin; but the word "heart" gives the real meaning; the word in Hebrew physiology designates the very innermost being, the deepest affections. The characteristic of the New Covenant is that the law is written in the heart by the Spirit (see Jerem. xxxi. 33); but it was anticipated in those who penetrated beyond the outer forms, and the true Israelite was always described as one who had the law in his heart. See Ps. xxxvii. 31; Isai. li. 7.

10. *from the great congregation*] Pss. xxii. 25, xxxv. 18.

11. With this verse begins the second part of the psalm, which runs altogether in a different strain; reflecting on his deep sinfulness the Psalmist is full of grief, and expresses his feelings in earnest prayers, sad confessions, imprecations against his enemies and longings for deliverance.

Withhold not] The same word is translated "refrained" in *v.* 9. The Psalmist evidently alludes to that passage. He had not refrained or "shut up" his lips, and he prays that God will not shut up His mercies, or "bowels of compassion," a New Testament expression which gives the real sense of the original word.

mercies from me, O LORD: let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me.

12 For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart † faileth me.

† Heb. *forsaketh.*

13 Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me: O LORD, make haste to help me.

14 [b] Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it; let them be driven backward and put to shame that wish me evil.

[b] Ps. 35. 4. & 70. 3.

15 Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame that say unto me, Aha, aha.

16 Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified.

17 But I *am* poor and needy; *yet* the Lord thinketh upon me: thou *art* my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God.

PSALM XLI.

1 *God's care of the poor.* 4 *David complaineth of his enemies' treachery.* 10 *He fleeth to God for succour.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

BLESSED *is* he that considereth † the poor: the LORD will deliver him † in time of trouble.

† Or, *the weak,* or, *sick.* † Heb. *in the day of evil.*

2 The LORD will preserve him, and keep him alive; *and* he shall be

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12. The exceedingly deep and bitter consciousness of sin in this verse belongs altogether to a late part of David's life. It was applied by the Fathers, especially by Augustine, to our Saviour as bearing the sins of the Church, of which He is at once the Head and Representative. Cf. Pss. xxxviii. 4, lxv. 3, lxix. 5, lxxiii. 26.

to look up] Or, "to see." David speaks twice before of the failure of sight under the combined working of mental and physical anguish. See Pss. xxxi. 9, and xxxviii. 10.

faileth me] Lit. "hath forsaken me," as in Ps. xxxviii. 10. David finds no support, no comfort in his own heart, it is like a false friend deserting him in his bitter need.

13. *deliver*] The ever-recurring cry of the penitent, cast down yet not despairing. His own heart has forsaken him, but he can still turn to God. Compare Ps. xxii. 20.

to help me] Or, "to my help," an expression somewhat more forcible, the help on which David was justified in counting, since it is secured to the faithful by God's promise. Cf. Ps. xxxviii. 22.

14. The following verses are repeated in Ps. lxx. The question as to which was the original is one on which critics differ. It appears on the whole most probable that the Psalmist on some occasion of deep affliction took the last verses of this psalm, and had them recited with a few and unimportant alterations.

15. *Aha*] See Ps. xxxv. 21.

17. *poor and needy*] The king might use these words truly at any time, most naturally in a season of deep affliction. Cf. Ps. lxxxvi. 1, and see xxxv. 10, xxxvii. 14.

thinketh] The transition in the original is very animated: "And as for me poor and needy—the Lord will care for me: my help and deliverer art Thou: O my God, tarry not." The last word is a deep sigh.

PSALM XLI.

This psalm, which completes the first book, is remarkable for its personal character. It explains or illustrates many intimations in psalms which belong to the same time. The Psalmist begins with blessing the man who shews due and kindly attention to the afflicted, and he then prays for restoration to health, and describes the feelings and conduct of his enemies during his sickness, their cruel slanders, malicious interpretations of his disease, and anticipations of his death. One among them is specially noted as a treacherous and crafty hypocrite, professing love and kindness, and using the opportunities of long intimacy to collect materials for the ruin of the sufferer's reputation. The psalm ends with a prayer for restoration, and a confident assurance of support and everlasting communion with God. The time is thus marked very exactly. It must have been after the arrival of Ahithophel, when the conspiracy was matured, and before the king's departure from Jerusalem, when the disease was still so severe as to keep him on his bed, but shewing some symptoms of amendment. It appears therefore to have been written some weeks, or it may be two or three months, before the catastrophe. All these indications point to the time when Absalom's conspiracy was nearly matured. The person designated in the psalm is undoubtedly Ahithophel. The structure is regular, four strophes, each of three verses.

blessed upon the earth: and [1]thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.

3 The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt [†]make all his bed in his sickness.

4 I said, LORD, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee.

5 Mine enemies speak evil of me, When shall he die, and his name perish?

6 And if he come to see *me*, he speaketh vanity: his heart gathereth iniquity to itself; *when* he goeth abroad, he telleth *it*.

7 All that hate me whisper together against me: against me do they devise [†]my hurt.

8 [†]An evil disease, *say they*, cleav-

[1] Or, *do not thou deliver.*

[†] Heb. *turn.*

[†] Heb. *evil to me.*

[†] Heb. *A thing of Belial.*

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1. *considereth*] This word includes the ideas of thoughtful attention, and judicious kindness, the kindness of a man who does not misinterpret the affliction.

poor] Or, "afflicted." David does not speak of poverty, but of weakness, a state of exhaustion and prostration.

the LORD will deliver, &c.] These prayers appear to be offered by David on behalf of one who had been faithful and loving in the time of his sore need; he desires that this friend may receive all that his own experience brought him to desire most earnestly. But it is possible that they are such as might be offered by the kindly visitor on behalf of David; the construction in that case would be somewhat different:—Blessed is the man who really understands the state of one smitten with a cruel disease, who can sympathize with him and pray for him, pray for his deliverance, for all that he needs.

in time of trouble] Or, as in marg., "in the day of evil." The meaning is the same, but the true rendering is more forcible. Symm. ἐν ἡμέρᾳ κακώσεως: thus too Syr.

2. *thou wilt not*] Or, as marg., "Do not Thou deliver him." A rapid transition from an expression of hope to a direct address to God.

unto the will] Literally, "the soul," equivalent to "desire;" cf. Pss. xxvii. 12, xxxv. 25.

3. *strengthen*] Or, "support."

thou wilt make] Literally, "Thou hast changed all his couch in his sickness." In these words two points are to be noted; first, the change of expression; instead of "Thou wilt," or "mayest Thou," we have "Thou hast," indicating the perfect confidence that the prayer is heard; and secondly, the phrase "changing all the couch," which most probably means changing the patient's state entirely, *i.e.* from a bed of sickness to perfect health (see Note below). This gives two gradations, first, the Lord supports and comforts the sufferer on his bed, and then raises him from it. All these expressions are so precise and graphic that there can be no reasonable doubt that David describes his own condition and feelings in the form of prayer, either offered by him on behalf of a compassionate friend, or by that friend on his behalf.

4. *I said*] The Hebrew emphasizes the word "I." I, for my part, said. This confirms the explanation suggested as an alternative in the foregoing note. Such was my friend's prayer, I for my own part, adds the Psalmist, prayed simply for mercy and healing, for I was conscious of my great sin.

heal my soul] vi. 2.

for I have sinned] Thus, as in other psalms of the same date, attributing his visitation altogether to his sin, Pss. xxxviii. 3—5, 17, 18, xxxix. 9—11, xl. 12.

against thee] li. 4.

5. *When shall he die*] This leaves no doubt as to the extremity of David's danger at the time.

6. *And if he come to see*] We can imagine this written immediately after a visit from Ahithophel, in whose face the clearsighted king saw the indications of malice and triumphant hate. David's remarkable power of insight is specially to be noticed; see 2 S. xiv. 17—20; and Ewald, 'Gesch.' III. p. 80.

he speaketh vanity] Rather, "he speaketh falsehood," *i.e.* hypocritical expressions of condolence, or hope of the king's recovery: the word rendered vanity (not the same as xxxix. 5) means mere emptiness, and lying; see Ps. xii. 2.

his heart gathereth] The heart in the meantime collects materials for new iniquity. The false friend watches the symptoms of disease in order to give point to slanderous imputations, which on leaving the sick chamber he takes care shall be rapidly spread. This verse loses somewhat of its force in the translation; nothing can be more graphic or affecting than the sick man's description of his false friend.

7. *whisper together*] The Hebrew is singularly graphic; it describes the enemies in a group whispering to each other, laying plots against the king; he seems to see them standing round his chamber, if not in his very presence.

8. *An evil disease*] Lit. "a thing of Belial is poured upon him" (see Ps. xviii. 4): here again the expressions are almost untranslateable—a thing of Belial, something which proceeds from crime and bears witness to it, a hopeless disease, one for which there is no remedy, is poured

eth fast unto him: and *now* that he lieth he shall rise up no more.

9 [a] Yea, [†] mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath [†] lifted up *his* heel against me.

10 But thou, O LORD, be merciful unto me, and raise me up, that I may requite them.

11 By this I know that thou favourest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me.

12 And as for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity, and settest me before thy face for ever.

13 Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen.

[a] John 13. 18.
[†] Heb. *the man of my peace.*
[†] Heb. *magnified.*

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into him, entering like molten ore into his whole system.

9. *mine own familiar friend*] Literally, "man of my peace," an expression used by Jerem., xx. 10. Ahithophel, David's counsellor, was sent for by Absalom: after his arrival "the conspiracy was strong, for the people increased continually with Absalom." 2 S. xv. 12. There can be little doubt that this traitor is meant. The implicit confidence placed in Ahithophel is described 2 S. xvi. 23. David, however, does not appear to have known that he had actually joined Absalom until he had himself left Jerusalem. See 2 S. xv. 31. This psalm was probably written immediately after Ahithophel's arrival. He would then of course wait on the king, who detected at once the indications of malice. The hatred of Ahithophel has been ingeniously traced to his connection with Uriah: see Blunt's 'Coincidences.'

did eat of my bread] As a courtier and friend. This expression could scarcely be used save by a prince; taken in combination with *v.* 10 it points to a king. 1 S. xx. 24, 25; cf. 2 S. ix. 7, 13.

lifted up his heel] The Hebrew phrase is singular, "magnified his heel," *i.e.* lifted up his foot to trample upon me, as a conqueror puts "his foot upon the neck" of a prostrate foe, Josh. x. 24. The application to Judas, as the antitype of all traitors, and specially prefigured by Ahithophel, the bosom friend of David, is made by our Lord Himself, Joh. xiii. 18; but with the important omission of the words "in whom I trusted."

10. *that I may requite them*] This sounds like revenge, and doubtless it is not in the spirit of the gospel; but it must be remembered that it was the duty of David, as king and judge, "bearing not the sword in vain...the minister of God...a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil" (Rom. xiii. 4), not only to put down the conspirators, but to inflict upon them just and adequate punishment.

11. *I know*] David does not say "I shall know," for he realizes the certain future. In the latter clause, however, the wrong tense is given by our translators; it should be "for my enemy will not shout (in triumph) over me."

thou favourest me] This expression is characteristic of David; see Pss. xviii. 19, xxii. 8, xxxv. 27; see especially 2 S. xv. 26.

12. *integrity*] See note on Ps. xxvi. 1.

settest me] Or, "wilt establish me."

for ever] If this phrase stood alone it might possibly be explained of confidence in perfect restoration to God's favour and life-long peace; such appears to be the meaning of the expression in Job xxxvi. 7; but comparing it with other passages, Pss. xvi. 11, xvii. 15, xxiii. 6, xxx. 12, we find here the distinct intimation of a hope of immortality.

13. This verse does not form part of the psalm, but marks the close of the first book; it is repeated at the end of the three following books: see Introduction.

NOTE on PSALM XLI. 3.

הפך "to turn," in the sense of an entire change either of position, or of state. משכב has the same ambiguity, "a couch," or "a condition," *e.g.* of sleep, or of suffering.

PSALM XLII.

[‖] Or, A Psalm *giving instruction of the sons,* &c.

1 *David's zeal to serve God in the temple.* 5 *He encourageth his soul to trust in God.*
To the chief Musician, [‖] Maschil, for the sons of Korah.

AS the hart [†] panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.

2 My soul thirsteth for God, for

[†] Heb. *brayeth.*

SECOND BOOK. PSALMS XLII.—LXXII.

PSALM XLII.

This psalm is attributed in the inscription to the sons of Korah. The circumstances under which it was composed are marked with more than usual distinctness. The Psalmist was in exile, far from the house of God, in deep affliction, living among an ungodly and hostile people, in a district belong-

the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?

3 [a]My tears have been my meat day and night, while they conti- [a] Ps. 80. 5.

ing to the mountainous region of Hermon, to the east of Jordan. In this and in the following psalm, which is closely connected with it, and most probably a continuation or second part, the writer expresses a confident hope of again approaching the altar of God, and praising Him upon the harp.

All these indications point to the time when David and his faithful followers fled from Absalom. It is, as Dean Stanley remarks ('S. P.' p. 329), the only time when the whole interest of Israelitish history is transferred to the trans-Jordanic territory. The people that came with David spread themselves out beyond the cultivated table-lands into the wilderness of the steppes of the Hauran. The exceeding beauty of the psalm [in Ewald's judgment (p. 257) superior to all in form and imagery] assures us that it was composed by a man of unsurpassed genius; and many points of resemblance with other psalms, noted by Delitzsch, p. 301, might justify us in assuming that man to be David. The eighty-fourth psalm, which is also attributed to the sons of Korah, and bears so close a resemblance to this as to make it all but certain that it was composed by the same author, appears to be the production of a king in exile (see *v.* 9); scarcely, however, as Ewald conjectures, of Jeconiah, whose place of exile was certainly not in the trans-Jordanic district, but in all probability of David. The expression of feeling is in most respects appropriate to the character of David and to his position. These considerations are not indeed conclusive; and some peculiarities of diction, more especially the use of the divine name Elohim (Jehovah occurring once only), may point to one of the family of Korah, who was specially attached to the king, and deeply imbued with his spirit. In that case it may be inferred that when the Psalmist composed it he was for a season separated from David, and sojourning in an outlying district, among a people of rude, wild habits, if not disaffected to the king, yet feeling little sympathy with the national religion, and no regard for its ministers. The psalm cannot have been written during the captivity, when there was no altar or sanctuary at Jerusalem; nor is there any period in the history of the kings of Judah in which such a combination of circumstances can be regarded as probable.

The psalm consists of two parts. The first, 1—5, expresses longing, distress, and hope: the second, 6—11, repeats those feelings with increased intensity, and more specific allusions to the cause and form of the Psalmist's affliction. Each part may be subdivided into two strophes, marking distinctly the rhythmical and lyrical character of the composition, which (as Kimchi, on Ps. iii., suggests) was probably adapted to the temple service, after the return from exile.

1. *As the hart panteth*] Or, "longeth." This is probably the true meaning of the word, which occurs once only in the rest of the Bible, Joel i. 20 (where A.V. has "cry"). In Arabic it is common in the sense of ascending, turning towards, and earnestly desiring (Freytag and Willmet, s.v.). An upward longing movement of the soul towards the object of its intense desire is thus vividly described. All the ancient versions, with the exception of the Syriac, and most modern critics accept this meaning both here and in Joel. The marg. "brayeth" has the Syriac in its support, and is defended by Hupfeld, and by Dr Kay who says that it is used specially of the cry of the antelope or gazelle, for which no authority is adduced. Gesenius compares ὀρύγω (which is not extant in Greek; see Curtius, 'Gk. Et.' § 508), and Dr Kay notices the name ὄρυξ, which resembles the Heb. in form, but has an Aryan etymology. "Braying," however, is an expression far less appropriate to the soul than "panting."

water brooks] Or, "water-courses." The word literally means deep channels, or ravines, such as are common on both sides of the Jordan, both in the Negeb, and cutting through the highlands on the east, forming the beds of streams which are much swollen during the rainy season, or after a thunderstorm. The Hebrew (aphik) is preserved in the names of many places in Syria and Palestine. See an excellent account of these ravines in Wilton's 'Negeb,' p. 26—31. He adds, "that the gazelle is constantly found resorting to these rocky ravines, in quest, doubtless, of the pools of water left here and there by the winter torrents." See also notes on Job vi. 15—18.

2. *the living God*] The source and sustainer of all life, see *v.* 8, "the God of my life:" probably, however, not without reference to the expression "living waters," the quickening and restorative streams for which the thirsty soul longeth. The same expression is found in Ps. lxxxiv. 2; Deut. v. 26; Josh. iii. 10; 1 S. xvii. 26 (where see note); 2 K. xix. 4; Hos. i. 10. The epithet is not applied to God in the New Testament, save as in 1 Thess. i. 9, in contrast with idols.

before God] Sc. in the temple, or tabernacle, a common idiom (see Exod. xxxiv. 23; Ps. lxxxiv. 7), which well expresses the intense realization of God's Presence in the sanctuary. This is not incompatible with a firm belief in His omnipresence, but the feeling of emptiness and darkness may seem specially characteristic of a Levite in exile.

3. *my meat*] Classical writers have the

nually say unto me, Where *is* thy God?

4 When I remember these *things*, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday.

[1] Heb. *bowed down.*

5 Why art thou [1]cast down, O my soul? and *why* art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet [1]praise him [1]*for* the help of his countenance.

[1] Or, *give thanks.*

[1] Or, *his presence* is *salvation.*

6 O my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from [1]the hill Mizar.

[1] Or, *the little hill.*

7 Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy

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same figure. "Cura, dolorque animi, lacrimæque alimenta fuere," Ovid, 'Met.' x. 288. Compare Job iii. 24; Ps. cii. 9.

4. *When I remember*] This does not correctly express the connection of thought. It should be **those things will I remember, and I will pour out my soul upon me.** I will turn my thoughts to other things, to the loved and unforgotten past, and will let my feelings overflow in a stream of devout affection. The expression "pour out" is specially used of the outpouring of the soul in prayer; cf. Pss. lxii. 8, cii. title; 1 S. i. 15; Lam. ii. 19.

for I had gone, &c.] Or, **how I passed on in the throng; how I preceded them to the house of God.** Two very peculiar words are used, the former probably denoting a dense crowd of pilgrims, the latter stately, onward movement in a public procession: both were probably idiomatic in the mouth of a Levite. The word here rendered "preceded" (Dr Kay has "marched") occurs only in Isai. xxxviii. 15, where the A.V. has "go softly." Aquila προβιβάζων αὐτούς: the other versions omit the word.

a multitude that kept holyday] Or, **keeping festival.** The same expression is used in Exod. xxiii. 14, where the A.V. has "keep a feast." The clause describes a vast crowd of worshippers, pilgrims from all parts of Palestine, assembled at Jerusalem for the three great festivals. Compare a very similar passage in Isai. xxx. 29. These processions were usually made with the accompaniments of music and song, such as are described in 2 S. vi. 5. Although all the expressions in this verse well befit a Levite, they are not less appropriate in the mouth of David, and in fact may seem peculiarly to describe the feelings and habits of a king, who was not merely a spectator or worshipper, but the leader of public devotions.

5. *cast down*] The form of the Hebrew word is very peculiar, and occurs in no other passage. It conveys the impression of utter prostration. Our Lord describes His own agony in words used by the LXX. in translating this and the preceding verse, περίλυπος, συνταράσσω; Matt. xxvi. 38; Joh. xii. 27.

O my soul] The exceeding beauty of this address to the soul rests upon a deep truth of inward experience. The higher spiritual principle controls and guides the emotions. Calvin, "castigat suam mollitiem."

disquieted in me] Or, **why moanest thou over me?** The Hebrew word expresses noise and turmoil: the soul bewailing the woes of the Psalmist. Cf. Job xiv. 22, note.

hope] Or, **wait thou for God.** There is a shade of difference between the two words: "to wait" implies patient submissive expectation, bound up with hope, and indeed a form of hope, but with less of brightness than of resignation. In Job xiii. 15 (where see note) the A.V. has "trust."

for the help of his countenance] This expresses the meaning of the Hebrew text as it stands: but see Note below.

6. *therefore*] The prostration of spirit serves but to bring God's former mercies to remembrance.

the land of Jordan] The trans-Jordanic region.

the Hermonites] Lit. **the Hermons**: the expression, which occurs nowhere else, probably denotes the mountain-ridges which extend in a southerly direction to the east of the Jordan. One of the heights may have borne the name Mizar, *i.e.* small, but there are no traces of such a name, and it may have been, as suggested in the marg., an appellative. The notice might seem to imply that the psalm was not written near Mahanaim. It is, however, possible that the term "Hermons" includes the mountainous district from Hermon to the Dead Sea, and it is certain that the heights of that great mountain are visible to that extent.

7. *Deep calleth unto deep*, &c.] This description might seem to refer to a storm at sea, huge waves rolling on continuously, the waters of heaven and of ocean meeting in waterspouts (cf. Jonah ii. 3): but the imagery appears to be strictly local. The word rendered "waterspouts" occurs elsewhere (2 S. v. 8, where A.V. has "gutter") probably in the sense of a watercourse, or trench cut in the rock: here it seems to designate the deep ravines which cleave the highlands of the trans-Jordanic district. Lynch describes a storm which burst

waves and thy billows are gone over me.

8 *Yet* the LORD will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song *shall be* with me, *and* my prayer unto the God of my life.

9 I will say unto God my rock, Why hast thou forgotten me? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

10 *As* with a ‖sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, Where *is* thy God?

‖ Or, *killing.*

11 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, *who is* the health of my countenance, and my God.

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upon him, while passing through one of these ravines, in terms which might seem to have been written in order to illustrate this passage. "The black and threatening clouds soon enveloped the mountain-tops, the lightning playing across it in incessant flashes, while the loud thunder reverberated from side to side of the appalling chasm. Between the peals we soon heard a roaring and continuous sound. It was the torrent from the rain-cloud, sweeping in a long line of foam down the steep declivity, bearing huge fragments of rocks, which, striking against each other, sounded like thunder." 'Expedition to the Jordan and Dead Sea,' quoted by Wilton, 'Negeb,' pp. 26, 27.

all thy waves, &c.] These words occur without a change in Jonah ii. 3. There can be no doubt that either the Psalmist took them from the Prophet, or *vice versâ*. The general originality of this beautiful psalm is in favour of the latter alternative; such words would naturally recur to the prophet's mind in his affliction: thus he quotes the eighteenth and other psalms repeatedly, *e.g.* xxxi. 22; the question will be more fully discussed in the notes on Jonah.

8. *command his lovingkindness*] Cf. Ps. xliv. 4, lxviii. 28.

in the night his song shall be with me] Job xxxv. 10, "God my maker, who giveth songs in the night."

9. *I will say*] The form of the Hebrew word betokens desire, "I would fain say."

my rock] Ps. xviii. 2; a steep cliff, inaccessible to foes, is meant.

mourning] Ps. xxxv. 14: lit. black, clad in mourning raiment, or in gloom of spirit.

oppression] The expression does not imply that the Psalmist was in captivity, but that he was surrounded by men who hated him. It would be quite suitable to the position of a follower of David at some distant outpost.

10. *As with a sword in my bones*] Or, **As it were breaking my bones.** Thus Isai. xxxviii. 13, "As a lion so will he break all my bones." The Hebrew word (*retsach*) is used for murder in the 6th Commandment, and in Ps. lxii. 3, "ye shall be slain." Dr Kay "as with a dagger stroke." Breaking or crushing appears to be the true meaning of the word. Thus in Arabic رضخ magnâ cum vi percussit: Freyt. s.v.

NOTES on PSALM XLII. 4, 5.

4. אדרם. The Masoretic punctuation makes this to be the Hithpael of an obsolete root: but Hupfeld observes that the suffix could not be accounted for; and that either the points must be altered, so as to give the Piel, or the suffix must be omitted: the former alternative is preferable, the points being in fact purely exegetical, while the letters are preserved by tradition, and are not to be altered without necessity; the difficulty of the reading is in favour of its authenticity. The Arabic derivation is quite uncertain.

5. A very slight alteration, not of the letters, but of the points (פני ואלהי for פניו אלהי), would give the same clause with which both this and the following psalm end, "the health of my countenance (sc. my salvation) and my God." The emendation is highly probable; it is supported by the Alexandrian codex of the LXX., the Vulg., Syr. and Arab., and by most modern critics. Dr Kay defends the present text.

PSALM XLIII.

1 *David, praying to be restored to the temple, promiseth to serve God joyfully.* 5 *He encourageth his soul to trust in God.*

JUDGE me, O God, and plead my cause against an ‖ungodly nation: O deliver me †from the deceitful and unjust man.

‖ Or, *unmerciful.* † Heb. *from a man of deceit and iniquity.*

2 For thou *art* the God of my strength: why dost thou cast me off? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

3 O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles.

4 Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God † my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God.

† Heb. *the gladness of my joy.*

5 [a] Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, *who is* the health of my countenance, and my God.

[a] Ps. 42. 5, 11.

PSALM XLIV.

1 *The church, in memory of former favours,* 7 *complaineth of their present evils.* 17 *Professing her integrity,* 23 *she fervently prayeth for succour.*

To the chief Musician for the sons of Korah, Maschil.

WE have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told

PSALM XLIII.

This psalm is admitted to be a continuation of the preceding one. It has the same metre, the same refrain, and refers to the same circumstances, oppression of enemies, banishment from the sanctuary, and a sure hope of deliverance and restoration. If not actually the completion of the psalm (which is most probable, and is represented by some good MSS.), it must have been composed by the same author, and at the same time.

1. *Judge me, O God*] Cf. Pss. vii. 8, xxvi. 1.

plead] Cf. note on xxxv. 1.

ungodly nation] Or, "a nation not pious," without religious principles or feelings. The people among whom the Psalmist was sojourning were probably a mixed race of wild, rude habits, such as at a later period occupied the district to the east of the Sea of Galilee.

man] It is uncertain whether, as in other psalms, an individual is singled out as leader and representative of the wicked; but the word may be taken collectively.

2. This verse repeats with slight variations the thoughts and even words of Ps. xlii. 9.

3. *thy light and thy truth*] Dr Kay suggests that this refers to the Urim and Thummim, and observes that David had sent back the ark with Zadok the high-priest to Jerusalem, 2 S. xv. 25. There is a slight, but perhaps significant, difference between the expression used here and in Pss. xl. 11, lvii. 3, both Davidic psalms.

thy holy hill] Mount Zion, where the sanctuary was placed in David's reign; see note on Ps. iii. 4.

tabernacles] At a later period a Psalmist would probably have said Thy Temple. Of the two words for tent or tabernacle he chooses that which signifies "indwelling:" the place where God manifests His presence.

4. *God my exceeding joy*] Lit. "the God of the joy of my exultation," source and sustainer of all gladness and bliss; a singularly emphatic combination, such as St Paul delights in: see *e.g.* 2 Cor. i. 3—6.

5. The refrain of the preceding psalm, repeated without any variation, but with a fulness of meaning, a certainty that the vows made in trouble will be offered on the Altar of God, and the hymn of thanksgiving with the accompaniment of sacred music will be accepted.

Ewald's concluding observations on these two psalms (p. 257) shew a deep and hearty appreciation of their beauty. "The two voices (of despondency and trust), which at the beginning stand out in entire discord and almost harsh antagonism (2—6), are at last brought into loving harmony, so that emotion and insight, excitement and thoughtfulness are wholly reconciled, and are intimately blended. All this without artifice or constraint; the true expression of the struggles between two contending forces in a spirit at once susceptible to tenderest feeling, yet upon reflection full of strength. The art consists wholly in the highest naturalness, and the purest inspiration. The imagery also in all its details is in the highest degree tender and poetical."

SECOND BOOK. See Introd. p. viii.

PSALM XLIV.

The circumstances under which this psalm was composed are described with more than usual minuteness. The national army had gone forth, but had sustained a severe reverse; the enemy had taken much spoil; multitudes had been slain, or scattered among the heathens; adjoining nations exulted in the disgrace of the Israelites, who were overwhelmed with shame and confusion; 9—17. On the other hand, the nation as a whole had been faithful to their covenant with God, were guiltless of idolatry, and throughout their trial could appeal to His knowledge of their sincerity, 17—22. Their representatives therefore felt themselves justified in pleading God's mercies, 1—3, finding in them a sure pledge of deliverance and victory, 4—8.

Considerable importance attaches to the question, to what period and circumstances

us, *what* work thou didst in their days, in the times of old.

2 *How* thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand, and plantedst them; *how* thou didst afflict the people, and cast them out.

3 For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them.

4 Thou art my King, O God: command deliverances for Jacob.

5 Through thee will we push down our enemies: through thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us.

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in the history of Israel such a description is applicable. It is the psalm which critics of very different schools have assigned with the greatest confidence to the Maccabean period; and there can be no doubt that, as a psalm peculiarly adapted to express the feelings of the people at that time, it was continually in their mouths. Then, in fact, Levites daily in the pulpits stood up and cried aloud, "Awake, why sleepest Thou, O Lord?" *v.* 23; hence called "awakeners." But there are insuperable objections to the hypothesis. The period of the Maccabees had been preceded by a general, all but universal apostasy; the only defeat sustained by the armies of Judas Maccabeus was in an expedition undertaken by two generals, Joseph and Azariah, *against* his express orders, and in a spirit of envy and vainglory, see 1 Macc. v. 56—62; Judas M. himself had contracted an alliance with Rome, wholly incompatible with the exclusive reliance on the Lord expressed in *vv.* 4—7: nor, had this psalm been written after his death, is it probable that all allusion to such a calamity would have been wanting. To these objections it must be added that the style of the psalm belongs to the best age of Hebrew; that the notice of Korahites points to a period preceding the captivity; and that even supposing that the Canon may not have been absolutely closed before the Maccabean age, it is not probable that a psalm composed then should have been inserted among others which are unquestionably ancient.

To other conjectural dates forcible objections may be urged. The psalm could scarcely refer to the defeat of Josiah, since notice of his death would certainly have formed its most prominent characteristic (cf. 2 K. xxiii. 29 ff., Zech. xii. 11); nor was that king's expedition undertaken for religious objects: see *v.* 22, and compare 2 Chro. xxxv. 22. Jehoiakim, whose capture is supposed by some to have given occasion to this and to some other psalms, "did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord," 2 Chro. xxxvi. 5. The ravages of the Philistines and Arabians in Jehoram's reign were "a plague" inflicted for the idolatry of the king and his people; see 2 Chro. xxi. 12—17.

Upon the whole the most probable date is that which is naturally suggested by the mention of the Korahites, and by the place of this psalm in the Psalter; together with other notices, which indicate the reign of David, when the nation, as such, was free from idolatry, and engaged in frequent wars. An occasion is suggested by the inscription of Ps. lx., which records an event, passed over in the brief accounts in Kings and Chron.; viz. an incursion of Edomites, while David was engaged in the Syrian campaign. From incidental notices we learn that the Israelites then suffered severely, losing so vast a number that Joab was sent to bury the slain while David completed the subjugation of Edom; compare 2 S. viii. 13 (where Edom should be read, LXX. *τὴν Ἰδουμαίαν*, for Aram, *i.e.* Syria); Ps. lx. inscription, and 1 K. xi. 15. No other period can be pointed out which accounts more satisfactorily for the combination of most opposite feelings, humiliation and confidence, mourning and hope, earnest remonstrance and unshaken trust.

The psalm has three main divisions, very distinctly marked; at the end of *v.* 8 by Selah, and of 16 and 22 by change of tone. The strophes are of unequal length, increasing or shortening in accordance with the Psalmist's feelings.

1. *our fathers have told us*] In accordance with the injunctions frequently recorded in the Pentateuch, *e.g.* Exod. x. 2, xii. 26, 27, xiii. 8, 10; cf. Ps. lxxviii. 3.

2. *plantedst*] Exod. xv. 17.

cast them out] Thus the LXX., Vulg., but most commentators render it "but Thou didst spread them out," sc. the Israelites, like the branches of a great tree; cf. Ps. lxxx. 9—13.

3. See Deut. viii. 17; Josh. xxiv. 12.

4. *my King*] Cf. Deut. xxxiii. 5, and note on Ps. xx. 9.

command, &c.] As an act of kingly might: cf. Lev. xxv. 21; Deut. xxviii. 8; Ps. cxxxiii. 3.

5. *push down*] The Hebrew word applies properly to horned beasts, the wild bull, bisons, &c., frequently taken as symbols of strength and force, see Deut. xxxiii. 17. The expression shews that the power of the nation was not broken, and that the reverse, though severe, was but temporary.

6 For I will not trust in my bow,
neither shall my sword save me.
7 But thou hast saved us from our
enemies, and hast put them to shame
that hated us.
8 In God we boast all the day long,
and praise thy name for ever. Selah.
9 But thou hast cast off, and put
us to shame; and goest not forth with
our armies.
10 Thou makest us to turn back
from the enemy: and they which
hate us spoil for themselves.
11 Thou hast given us †like sheep
appointed for meat; and hast scattered
us among the heathen.
12 Thou sellest thy people †for
nought, and dost not increase *thy*
wealth by their price.
13 [a]Thou makest us a reproach to
our neighbours, a scorn and a derision
to them that are round about us.
14 [b]Thou makest us a byword
among the heathen, a shaking of the
head among the people.
15 My confusion *is* continually
before me, and the shame of my face
hath covered me,
16 For the voice of him that re-
proacheth and blasphemeth; by reason
of the enemy and avenger.
17 All this is come upon us; yet
have we not forgotten thee, neither
have we dealt falsely in thy covenant.

† Heb. *as sheep of meat.*
† Heb. *without riches.*

[a] Ps. 79. 4.
[b] Jer. 24. 9.

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tread them under] continues the metaphor; for the fulfilment of the hope, see 2 S. viii. 13, 14.

9—16. The transition of thought is sudden, abrupt, vehement; true as all that has been said may be, yet a great and terrible blow has been inflicted, and the people are yet enduring the consequences.

9. *our armies*] The expression implies the actual existence of considerable armies, such as Judah did not possess after the reign of David, at any time which critics have fixed upon for the composition of this psalm.

11. *scattered*] The defeat appears to have taken place beyond the frontier, so that the fugitives were driven among the neighbouring tribes. All the expressions indicate a fearful defeat and slaughter, but not a conquest, certainly not a capture of Jerusalem. The expression scarcely seems applicable to the selling of Israelitish captives, of which there are notices under the early kings; sc. by the Tyrians, Joel iii. 6; and by the Philistines of Gaza, Amos i. 6. This psalm was evidently sung while the invasion was still proceeding.

12. *for nought*] This exactly expresses the meaning of the Hebrew; lit. "for no-wealth." There may possibly be a reference to a Hebrew father's right to dispose of his children (so Hupf.); but it more probably indicates a feeling that a people so cast off are treated as worthless. Compare Deut. xxxii. 30; Judg. ii. 14, iii. 8, iv. 2, 9: to the first of which passages the Psalmist not improbably refers. It may be that the assertion that God gains nothing by giving up His people has a still deeper meaning, and implies that He must have a special intention, viz. of testing their faith, or bringing them to repentance: in correlation with this phrase is the equally frequent statement that when tried, and restored, they are ransomed without price. Both thoughts occur constantly in the prophets; see Isai. xlv. 13, lii. 3; Jer. xv. 13.

13. *a reproach*] For corresponding expressions cf. Ps. xxxix. 8, lxxix. 4, lxxxix. 41; Neh. ii. 17. The Psalmist exhausts the terms for such insults as at every season of national calamity were heaped upon Israel by Philistines, Edomites, and the "children of Lot."

14. *a byword*] This word expresses very accurately the sense of the Hebrew "mashal" (generally rendered "proverb"), which includes all sententious or proverbial sayings; cf. Job xvii. 6.

16. *avenger*] Lit. **him that taketh vengeance.** The expression is specific, and probably implies that the war was carried on by the enemy to recover lost territory, or to avenge former defeats. This applies to a time such as that of David, when the Israelites made foreign excursions, but less aptly to that of the Maccabees.

17. *yet have we not forgotten thee*] The whole of this very remarkable passage claims for the Israelites not only freedom from the old national tendency to idolatry, but thorough sincerity in religion, and consistent integrity of life. The only time at which such a description could have been used with propriety must have been one of national reformation; not, however, preceded by apostasy, as was the case in the time of Josiah, and still more so in that of the Maccabees; but a thorough, earnest, and successful reformation, such as was undoubtedly that which took place in the early part of David's reign at Jerusalem. The Korahites might well have composed and sung the psalm at that time, after a severe, though temporary reverse, as a solemn act of national supplication.

18 Our heart is not turned back,
‖ Or, *goings.* neither have our ‖steps declined from thy way;

19 Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death.

20 If we have forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a strange god;

21 Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart.

[c] Rom. 8. 36. 22 [c]Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.

23 Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord? arise, cast *us* not off for ever.

24 Wherefore hidest thou thy face, *and* forgettest our affliction and our oppression?

25 For our soul is bowed down to the dust: our belly cleaveth unto the earth.

26 Arise [†]for our help, and redeem us for thy mercies' sake. [†] Heb. *a help for us.*

PSALM XLV.

The majesty and grace of Christ's kingdom.
10 The duty of the church, and the benefits thereof.

To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, for the sons of Korah, ‖Maschil, A Song of loves. ‖ Or, *of instruction.*

MY heart [†]is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things [†] Heb. *boileth, or, bubbleth up.*

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19. *the place of dragons*] **the place of jackals**: the place where jackals troop together to prey upon the bodies of the slain. Ps. lxiii. 10. Hitzig would identify this with the country about Jamnia, where jackals are said to abound; but the description would be equally applicable to any district in Palestine; and is especially suitable to the field, which the defeated army could not for a time approach even to bury the corpses of their comrades.

20. Compare the protestations of Job, ch. xxxi.

21. *search this out*] This implies far more than a mere suppression of idolatrous worship. The writer must have felt that the nation, as a whole, was clear of the guilt of apostasy. For the expressions cf. Ps. cxxxix. 1; Jer. xvii. 10; Job xxxi. 14.

22. *for thy sake*] This verse supplies the strongest argument for the Maccabean date: but in truth it is equally suitable to that of David. In the king's mind, and in that of the Levites, the cause of Israel was the cause of God: they fought for Him, and died for Him. For St Paul's application of the words see marg. ref.

23. *Awake*] This bold address occurs frequently in the psalms, *e.g.* vii. 6, xxxv. 23, lix. 4, 5.

why sleepest thou] The sleep of God, a bold metaphor, implies an apparent suspension of His providential government, when His foes are triumphant, and His servants defeated. It suggests, however, that the suspension is but temporary, and has more of hope than despondency. The Psalmist knows that "He who keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps."

O Lord] Not Jehovah, but Adonai: the Psalmist does not use the Name which specially recalls the spiritual covenant, but one which implies dominion: he appeals to the King and God of the nation.

25. Cf. Ps. cxix. 25.

PSALM XLV.

This psalm celebrates the nuptials of an anointed king. It describes him as beautiful and gracious, blessed for evermore; as a conqueror, whose objects are truth, humility, and righteousness; as a divine person, bearing the name of God, seated on an everlasting throne, ruling in righteousness, anointed with the oil of gladness, received with the strains of harps in ivory palaces: his bride is a king's daughter, one of a foreign race, beautiful and glorious; her attendants are pure virgins; her children are to be princes in all the earth.

Most of the later commentators, including some of undoubted soundness, hold this to be a bridal hymn written for the nuptials of a king of Israel or Judah: but the imagery, though it may have been suggested by such an event, is in many points utterly unsuitable, and the direct ascription of divinity to an earthly king is contrary to the usage and spirit of the Hebrew scriptures. Some have suggested Ahab, others Jehoram (both on account of the connection with Tyre through Jezebel and Athaliah); a notion which scarcely needs refutation, but which proves how strongly the objection to Solomon is felt by those who maintain it. Against Solomon it may be urged that he was emphatically a prince of peace, and that gifts betokening submission would not have been offered by the Tyrians on the occasion of his marrying an Egyptian princess. These objections together, especially the first, are fatal. There remains no other alternative but to take the old traditional interpretation of the Hebrew church, confirmed by the authority of the New Testament (Heb. i. 8, 9) and accepted by Michaelis, Rosenmüller,

which I have made touching the king: my tongue *is* the pen of a ready writer.

2 Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.

3 Gird thy sword upon *thy* thigh, O *most* mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty.

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and other writers; and to regard this psalm as directly Messianic. See Introduction, § 18. The ideal which floats before the mind of the writer is that of a Prince combining all the characteristics of the best kings of Judah with a divine nature, such as is distinctly intimated in ancient prophecies. The daughter of the King is the nation in its religious aspect, or the Church: her attendants, the honourable women, themselves also daughters of kings, represent foreign nations brought into willing submission to the Messiah. The dominion of the King and of the Bride administered by their royal offspring (see note on *v.* 16) extends to the ends of the earth, and will endure to the end of time.

The psalm consists of two principal parts, with a brief introduction and conclusion. From 2 to 9 the glory of the King is described; from 10 to 17 the beauty and splendour of the Bride, to whom exhortations and promises are addressed. The structure, as Köster points out, is highly artistic: 1, 1, 3; 3, 1, 3, 3, 1, 1: divided into two parts by *v.* 9, each part with similar strophes, but in reversed order.

Inscription — *Shoshannim*] *i.e.* lilies: as in Pss. lxix., lxxx., see also lx. Probably the tune or melody to which the psalm was sung or recited, but the word may be metaphorical, equivalent to beautiful maidens, brides or bridesmaids: and the meaning may be a psalm to be recited to a melody adapted to a bridal solemnity. The combination of "Maschil," a song of instruction, with "a song of loves" is peculiar, and indicates probably the religious and mystic character of this psalm.

A certain sacredness attaches to the lily; "lily-work was on the capitals of the pillars Jachin and Boaz, 1 K. vii. 19, 22, and on the brim of the molten sea, ib. 26." Kay.

1. *My heart*, &c.] Such an introduction is peculiar to psalms of high and solemn import, and is not found in those which refer to personal feelings, or to temporary occasions.

is inditing] Or, **utters**. The Hebrew word occurs only in this passage, but it undoubtedly means "gushes," bubbles up, like boiling water, or a spring, stirred and forced by an inner commotion of joyful feelings: contrast Ps. xxxix. 1, 2.

a good matter] **a good word**, *i.e.* a beautiful utterance, a hymn full of goodness and joy, gushing out from the full heart.

I speak of the things] The Hebrew gives a different and more forcible meaning: **I speak; my works are for the King**, *i.e.* I speak (moved by an inward impulse), and all my words have but one object, the praise of the King. The word rendered "works" exactly corresponds to poem (*ποίημαta*, Theod.), that which a poet makes. Köster refers it to the artistic structure, see above: Dr Kay connects it with the wrought tapestry of the tabernacle, to which the same word is applied in Exod. xxvi. 1, and elsewhere.

my tongue] The tongue expresses the inward thought fluently, rapidly, either "as a short-hand writer" (employed at a very early period), or "as a well-instructed scribe." The LXX. *γραμματεὺς ὀξυγράφος*. Thus Ezra is called "a ready scribe" (סופר מהיר), vii. 6.

2. *fairer*] The beauty of the King is placed first with peculiar fitness in a bridal hymn; but the beauty here spoken of is a divine attribute; the word is the same in derivation as that applied to Jehovah, Ps. l. 2, but even stronger in its form, which occurs in no other passage. Beauty was regarded by the Hebrew as the outward manifestation of inherent nobleness, or of a nature akin to the divine. In this case the beauty is expressly said to be above that of man, an expression which marks the object of the hymn, as One standing apart from and above those whose nature He shares. The representation is unquestionably ideal: it refers to the Messiah. Compare Isai. xxxiii. 17. Thus the Chaldee paraphrast, "Thy beauty, O King Messiah, is greater than that of the sons of men." Cf. Song of Sol. v. 10.

grace] The grace of sweetness, loveliness, all that is attractive and gracious in expression, has its seat upon the lips of the King; from such lips none but gracious words can flow; the anointing Spirit dwells upon them: cf. Luke iv. 18, 22, where the word is used with special reference to Isai. lxi. 1—3.

therefore] The blessing is inseparable from the spiritual gifts and graces visibly represented in the Person of the Glorified Messiah; such a declaration would hardly have been made of a mere earthly king.

for ever] See *vv.* 6, 17.

3. *O most mighty, with thy glory*] Thus Ps. xxiv. 8, 10, *twice* of the King of Glory; see also Isai. ix. 6, where the same word, combined with El, is applied to the Messiah. The Psalmist bids the King gird on his sword, and array himself with glory and

4 And in thy majesty [t]ride prosperously because of truth and meekness *and* righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.

5 Thine arrows *are* sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; *whereby* the people fall under thee.

6 [a]Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom *is* a right sceptre.

7 Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

8 All thy garments *smell* of myrrh, and aloes, *and* cassia, out of the ivory

[t] Heb. *prosper thou, ride thou.*

[a] Hebr. 1. 8.

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majesty, the attributes of God (see Ps. xcvi. 7), of which those of Messiah, and of the king as type of Messiah (see xxi. 5), are the reflection. The sword of Messiah (the sharp two-edged sword of Revelation, i. 16, and xix. 15) is the Word of God. See Isai. xlix. 2; Heb. iv. 12. Dr Kay takes "thy glory and thy majesty" to be in apposition to "sword."

4. *ride prosperously*] Literally, "prosper, ride;" but the word for "prosper" means rather "go forth," "break forth," and the word rendered "ride" means either "drive a war-chariot," or "ride a war-horse." The King goes forth, like the Sun (see Ps. xix. 4—6), "conquering and to conquer," Rev. vi. 2.

because of] *i.e.* for the sake of truth, and the meekness which is one with righteousness. The combination of the two words meekness and righteousness is marked by a singular construction in the Hebrew; the two attributes are, so to speak, identified. The one object of the wars of God's Anointed is to make the attributes incarnate in Him triumphant; cf. Zech. ix. 9.

thy right hand shall teach] The right hand is personified: the course of the warrior is cleared for him by his own achievements; his right hand, so to speak, leads the warrior onward, and may be said by a bold figure to teach him the terrible things which it executes.

5. The construction of this verse is rather difficult, but the meaning is clear: **Thine arrows are sharp—peoples fall under thee—in the heart of the enemies of the King.** The Psalmist sees the battlefield, the sharp arrows fly, the people fall; he looks, there are the arrows in their hearts. The vividness of the description is lost by a prosaic translation which supplies the ellipses.

6. *Thy throne, O God*] This is the literal, and grammatical construction. The King is addressed as God (thus Aq. ὁ θρόνος σου, θεέ: the other Greek Vv. have the same meaning, ὁ θεός). Feeling that such words could not possibly be addressed to an earthly king, commentators have suggested other interpretations; such as "thy throne (is a throne of) God:" but it is certain that no such explanation would have been thought of, had not a doctrinal bias intervened. The word "God" is applied to kings, and even to judges, as representatives of the divine power and justice; see Exod. xxi. 6, xxii. 8 (Heb.); Ps. lxxxii. 1, 6; but never in a direct address as in this and in the following verse. The Person before the Psalmist's mind was a visible manifestation of the Godhead; the ideal King of Whom his earthly sovereign was an imperfect type. The objection that the Messiah is never called God or addressed as God in the Old Testament, begs the entire question and is untrue (see Isai. viii. 8, "O Immanuel"). Other explanations of this passage are contrary to its plain and literal meaning. On the whole passage see Dr Pusey, 'Daniel the Prophet,' pp. 470, 471, and Liddon, who quotes him, 'Bampton Lectures,' p. 182.

for ever and ever] The strongest possible terms are here used to denote absolute eternity.

the sceptre, &c.] Compare the address to God, Ps. lxvii. 4, and see xcvi. 10.

7. *God, thy God*] The old Vv. and most interpreters take "God" and "Thy God" to be in apposition. The construction, however, is unusual, and the more natural interpretation would be, "Therefore, O God, Thy God hath anointed Thee." This agrees with the preceding verse, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." The Version in the Prayer-book inserts "even" before "thy God." Our Version faithfully represents the original, and leaves the question as to the construction unsettled. The Hebrew punctuation is in favour of the ordinary translation, and probably suggested it: but at the utmost it represents the Masoretic tradition; on which see critical Note to Ps. xxii. 16.

oil of gladness] *i.e.* with joy symbolized on festive occasions by precious unguents. The gladness flows (like Aaron's "precious ointment," Ps. cxxxiii. 2) from the head of the King to the skirts of His raiment; it is diffused over every portion of His mystic body.

above thy fellows] *i.e.* above all other kings. See 1 K. iii. 11—13; where God declares to Solomon "There shall not be any among the kings like unto thee."

8. *All thy garments*, &c.] Lit. "Myrrh and aloes, cassia are all thy garments," so impregnated with precious odours that they are, so to speak, woven out of them; nought

palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.

9 Kings' daughters *were* among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.

10 Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house;

11 So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he *is* thy Lord; and worship thou him.

12 And the daughter of Tyre *shall be there* with a gift; *even* the rich among the people shall intreat †thy favour. † Heb. *thy face.*

13 The king's daughter *is* all glorious within: her clothing *is* of wrought gold.

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but odours themselves. The passion for costly scents has always been characteristic of Orientals.

whereby] The Hebrew is not quite clear, but the latter half of the verse may probably be rendered "from palaces of ivory strains of harps delight thee." As the bridegroom enters the palace, where the queen awaits him, the minstrels welcome him with their harps. There is frequent mention of ivory in the Bible; even of an ivory palace, as in 1 K. xxii. 39; Amos iii. 15; see also Song Sol. vii. 4. The mention of palaces, however, not one, but several, agrees with the ideal, or Messianic interpretation. It is improbable that Solomon, in whose reign ivory appears first to have been imported (see 1 K. x. 22), or any of his successors possessed buildings constructed of so rare and precious a material. N.B. The explanation of מִנִּי as equivalent to מִן with an ellipsis of the relative pronoun is now generally abandoned, but is defended by Dr Kay.

9. *thy honourable women*] Lit. "Thy precious ones," "Thy jewels." It could scarcely be said of any of the later kings of Judah that kings' daughters were among the attendants upon his queen. One of David's wives was the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur (2 S. iii. 3); the daughter of Pharaoh is the only wife of Solomon whose royal parentage is recorded. Like other peculiar traits in the description this is wholly ideal; it has its true, though mystical interpretation, in the Churches which recognize in Christ their Lord.

upon thy right hand did stand] See 1 K. ii. 19.

the queen] The Hebrew word is not that which is generally used to designate the queens of Israelitish princes. It is a poetical word, and denotes a peculiarity in the choice and position of the bride. Mystically it must refer to the Church, but in her perfect purity and unity, as she is described in the book of Revelation, xix. 7, 8, xxi. 2.

in gold of Ophir] See note on Job xxviii. 16, and 1 K. ix. 28. From 1 Chro. xxix. 4, it appears that "gold of Ophir" was well-known in David's time.

10. *Hearken*] The earnestness of this threefold address is peculiarly suitable to the occasion: how difficult to gain the attention of the bride, how needful to make her fully conscious of the complete change of sphere, involving the disruption of old ties, and the entire surrender of heart to new duties. Equally true and forcible is the application to the Church; she has one work, to give herself up to Christ; one sacrifice to make—that of all associations and bonds alien to Him. Moll regards this address as inapplicable to the Jewish Church, and draws from it an argument against the Messianic interpretation of the psalm, but the Church, as such, is invariably represented as taken out of the heathen world; even of the race of Israel it is said, their "fathers served other gods." Josh. xxiv. 15: see too Deut. xxvi. 5.

O daughter] A form of address at once tender, affectionate, and peculiarly appropriate. The Queen is at the transition point from maidenhood to womanhood: just entering the King's palace with old associations lingering in her spirit, which give a peculiar charm to this word of gracious welcome.

11. *So shall the king*] The love of the King is thus represented as won by the love of the Bride; that alone makes her other charms attractive.

thy Lord] This of course would be true of the bride of an Israelitish king, and the word rendered worship is used of the obeisance offered unto a king by his wife (see *e.g.* 1 K. i. 16); but it has a peculiar significance as applied to the relation between Christ and His Church.

12. *And the daughter of Tyre*] The Psalmist has before him the daughter of Tyre (representing the wealth of the heathen world); her princely merchants offer gifts, tokens of willing submission and allegiance to the queen. The only historical events to which such a statement could possibly apply are the marriages of Solomon, and of Jehoram, who married Athaliah the granddaughter of a king of Tyre. Certainly *that* alliance would not be celebrated by Korahites, moved by the Spirit of God.

13. *all glorious within*] **all glory inwardly.** The commentators generally take this to mean "in the inner chamber of the palace," where the bride first takes off her

14 She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.

15 With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace.

16 Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.

17 I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever.

PSALM XLVI.

1 *The confidence which the church hath in God.*
8 *An exhortation to behold it.*

To the chief Musician ‖for the sons of Korah, ‖ Or, *of.*
A Song upon Alamoth.

GOD *is* our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

2 Therefore will not we fear, though

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veil and shews herself in all the glory of personal charms and bridal apparel: nor is this less applicable to the true Bride whose beauty will only be really discerned when she enters the Eternal Palace. The word rendered "within" has certainly that meaning Lev. x. 18; but, as Dr Kay justly observes, the Hebrew word is used of the interior cedar lining of the Holy Place, and of the gold lining of the Holy of Holies, 1 K. vi. 18, 22: an application which entirely justifies our A.V. in its most natural meaning.

of wrought gold] Woven with threads of gold. Thus Virgil describes the robes "quas —læta laborum Ipsa suis quondam manibus Sidonia Dido Fecerat, et tenui telas discreverat auro." 'Æn.' XI. 73.

14. *brought unto the king*] With some variation in the figure the King is now represented as awaiting the Bride. In the former part of the psalm, as in the Song of Solomon, i. 4, the Bride is brought by the King into his chambers. This also suits the symbolical, better than the merely historical explanation, cf. Rev. xix. 7, 8. Thus in the following clause the virgins who attend upon the Queen are brought to the King; whereas in Eastern harems they are under the absolute control of their mistress; this deviation from national usage cannot be well accounted for excepting by reference to the inner meaning: pure, virginal, saintly spirits, who form the cortège of the heavenly Bride.

needlework] In embroidery of divers colours. The costliness of these robes and their exceeding beauty always gave them a place among the most precious treasures of Eastern princes. Cf. 2 S. xiii. 18. The gold may symbolize the perfect purity and natural dignity of the Bride, the many-coloured and beautiful raiment her possession of all Christian graces.

16. *of thy fathers*] The words are addressed to the King, not to the Bride: the fathers are those "of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came," Rom. ix. 5.

The promise that the King's children shall be princes in all the earth had doubtless a partial fulfilment in Solomon's reign, nor is the anticipation of an universal dominion alien to the spirit of Hebrew poetry; cf. Ps. xviii. 43; but the mystical meaning is more in accordance with the whole strain of prophecy. See 1 Pet. ii. 9; Rev. i. 6, v. 10, xx. 6.

17. *I will make thy name to be remembered*] The final address of the Psalmist is to the King, not to the Bride, as the A.V. might imply. The work of all Christ's messengers, whether prophets or evangelists, is simply to make His name known.

for ever and ever] The last words leave no doubt as to the Messianic character of the psalm. The people, lit. the peoples, *i. e.* the Gentiles, accepting Christ as their King, praise Him "as God over all, blessed for evermore." Rom. ix. 5. Kay.

PSALM XLVI.

This psalm and the two following have the same general subject and character. They express the perfect confidence of true Israelites in the presence and protection of God at a season of imminent and terrible danger. Some allusions may seem to point to the invasion of the Assyrians under Sennacherib, which was preceded by great convulsions, and by the overthrow of many peoples closely connected with the kingdom of Judah, and which was terminated by their sudden and complete destruction. It is observed, moreover, that there is a singular resemblance between these psalms and portions of Isaiah: and they were probably applied by the people of Judah to that signal deliverance in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah. Fürst attributes the psalm (as also xlviii., lxxv., lxxvi.) to Hezekiah; 'Gesch. der biblischen Literatur,' II. p. 383. It seems, however, on the whole more likely that they were composed when the kingdom of Judah was invaded by the combined forces of Moab, Ammon, and Edom in the reign of Jehoshaphat; see 2 Chro. xx. The feelings and whole current of thought in these psalms coincide remarkably with those expressed by Jehoshaphat himself, and by the prophet Jahaziel, "a Levite of the sons of Asaph," 2 Chro. xx. 14, before the catastrophe, and with the account of the rejoicings of the king and his people at

the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into †the midst of the sea;

† Heb. *the heart of the seas.*

3 *Though* the waters thereof roar *and* be troubled, *though* the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

4 *There is* a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy *place* of the tabernacles of the most High.

5 God *is* in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, †*and that* right early.

† Heb. *when the morning appeareth*

6 The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted.

7 The LORD of hosts *is* with us;

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the valley of Berachah, and on their triumphant return to Jerusalem, when they came "with psalteries and harps and trumpets unto the house of the LORD." 2 Chro. xx. 28. See notes on *v.* 9, xlvii. 9, and xlviii. 4.

The expressions, however, are for the most part general, well adapted for any season of severe trial; and as such adopted by the Reformed Church of Germany in Luther's grand paraphrase "Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott."

The psalm has three equal portions, each of four lines, marked distinctly at the close by the musical term Selah. The second and third portions have also the same refrain, which may possibly have been omitted by a transcriber at the end of the first portion, after *v.* 3; a conjecture of Hupfeld, approved by Delitzsch.

Alamoth] The Hebrew word means virgins: it is a musical term, and probably signifies that the psalm was to be recited by alto or soprano voices, principally by maidens. Cf. 1 Chro. xv. 20. Thus Miriam, accompanied by the women of Israel, sang the refrain to the Song of Moses; Ex. xv. 20, 21.

1. *a very present help*] Or, "found greatly a help in trouble." The text expresses the sense correctly, and very beautifully. Luther paraphrases it in his hymn, "Er hilft uns frey aus aller Noth."

2. *though the earth be removed*] Or, **changes**, as in Ps. xv. 4, *i.e.* undergoes a series of convulsions which change its condition and aspect. The reader will recall the words of Horace, "Si fractus illabatur orbis, impavidum ferient ruinæ," but the difference between the Hebrew and Latin is remarkable in two respects: the confidence of the Roman is grounded on his own justice and tenacity of purpose, that of the Hebrew on God's Presence; and the image of the broken world falling in ruins is far less true than that of the earth shaken and mountains overthrown by a terrible earthquake: the Hebrew has the advantages of humility and truth.

be carried] Or, **be hurled**; "carried" scarcely expresses the force of the Hebrew word, which is used only of violent motion.

into the midst of the sea] Lit., as in marg., **into the heart of the seas.** The plural "seas" is equivalent to the word ocean, or the vast deep out of which the mountains were raised in creation. Cf. Gen. i. 9, 10.

3. *roar*] Cf. Ps. xciii. 3, 4; so Jer. v. 22, xlvi. 7, xlvii. 2; Matt. vii. 25. These and similar passages leave no doubt as to the allegorical meaning: the convulsions of nature represent national revolutions.

4. *a river*] This figure is expressly chosen to represent the contrast between the serene and tranquil influence of God's Presence among His people, and the convulsions described in the preceding verses. There may be an allusion to the "waters of Shiloah that go softly," which Isaiah, viii. 6, uses as an emblem of the house of David; but in this passage the river is God's Presence, His own mighty Spirit, which flows, so to speak, around the city, at once protecting it (see Isai. xxxiii. 21) and supplying all its wants, see Rev. xxii. 2. Thus Hitzig, Hupfeld, and most critics.

tabernacles] Or, "dwellings," though in the plural the word refers, as in Ps. xliii. 3, to the sanctuary or tabernacle with its courts.

5. *God is in the midst of her*] Lev. xxvi. 12; Isai. xii. 6.

right early] Rather, **at the approach of morning.** This does not mean "right early," but at the time of deliverance which comes like dawn after the gloomy night. The same expression is used Ex. xiv. 27. Cf. Pss. xxx. 5, xlix. 14; Isai. xvii. 14. Thus Kimchi, Michaelis, Hengst., and Hupfeld.

6. This verse explains the figures used in *vv.* 2, 3. The reference is still clearer in the Hebrew, where the same words (which are rendered in the text "rage" and "roar" and "moved" and "removed") are used in both places.

melted] Or, **was dissolved**; an expression frequently used to denote the effect of God's judgments. Thus Ps. lxxv. 3; Exod. xv. 15; Isai. xiv. 31, "art dissolved;" lxiv. 7, where see marg.; Amos ix. 5; 2 Pet. iii. 11. Here it implies the discomfiture of all His enemies.

7. *The* LORD...*Jacob*] The confidence of the Psalmist rests on two principles, the uni-

† Heb. *an high place for us.*

the God of Jacob *is* †our refuge. Selah.

8 Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth.

9 He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire.

10 Be still, and know that I *am* God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

11 The LORD of hosts *is* with us; the God of Jacob *is* our refuge. Selah.

PSALM XLVII.

The nations are exhorted cheerfully to entertain the kingdom of Christ.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm ‖for the sons of Korah. ‖ Or, *of*

O CLAP your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph.

2 For the LORD most high *is* terrible; *he is* a great King over all the earth.

3 He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet.

4 He shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom he loved. Selah.

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versality of God's dominion, indicated by the title "the Lord of Hosts," and His covenanted relation to the Hebrews, as the God of Jacob. In the former clause several MSS. have "the God of Hosts," Elohim for Jehovah: a reading preferred by some critics.

is with us] Thus the prophet Jahaziel promises, "go out against them, for the LORD will be with you," 2 Chro. xx. 17. Heb. *Immanu*, reminding us of the great name Immanuel.

8. *Come, behold*] These words are suitable to either of the transactions referred to in the introduction; but of the two more specially to the ruin of the invaders in Jehoshaphat's reign, when, "by the power of Jehovah," the Ammonites and Moabites first destroyed their allies, the Edomites, and then slew each other: see 2 Chro. xx. 22, 23. In this psalm there is no notice of the annihilation of a vast army by a sudden visitation from heaven.

9. See Isai. ii. 4. The resemblance between this passage, and indeed the whole psalm, and the early chapters of Isaiah is exceedingly striking. The images in the prophet are drawn out more fully, with great variety and richness of details; hence it may be inferred that in the psalm we have an earlier production.

10. *Be still*] Or, "cease," sc. from your anxieties and efforts. Cf. Exod. xiv. 13. In 1 S. xv. 16, the word "cease" is used thus absolutely.

I will be exalted] Cf. Isai. ii. 11, 17; Ps. xxi. 13, and see Exod. xiv. 4, 17, 18.

PSALM XLVII.

This appears to have been composed for a national thanksgiving after the deliverance celebrated in the preceding psalm. The victory had been won without a battle, and is therefore ascribed, with even more than usual propriety, to the personal intervention of God. Hence in *v.* 5 God is represented as returning after the victory to His heavenly abode, and seated in glory on His throne. The connection of the two psalms is admitted by critics; even Ewald recognizes the similarity of tone and subject, though, without assigning any special reason, he places this among the later psalms.

The fifth verse comes between two strophes, each of four verses; the division is marked by Selah.

1. *O clap your hands*] The immediate result of God's judgments was described in the preceding psalm. That was terror and awe. Then the strain changes; the ultimate effects are realized, and in the establishment of peace and justice all nations are called upon to recognize His goodness. The order of the two clauses should be reversed, "All ye peoples, clap your hands."

2. *terrible*] Or, "awful;" the fear is not incompatible with reverent joy: cf. Ps. lxv. 5, lxviii. 35, lxxvi. 7—9; Deut. vii. 21.

3. *He shall subdue*] Or, **He subdueth**; the Psalmist realizes the future, for he regards the government of the world as the sure heritage of Israel. The same word is used in Ps. xviii. 47, where see note.

4. *He shall choose*] **He chooseth**: hence the futility of all efforts to dispossess His people. There is obviously a reference to the special object of the invasion, which resulted in so complete a discomfiture. Jehoshaphat's words are "to come to cast us out of Thy possession, which Thou hast given us to inherit." 2 Chro. xx. 11.

the excellency] *i.e.* that inheritance in which Jacob exults with grateful joy: cf. Amos vi. 8, viii. 7; Isai. xxxv. 2, lx. 15; Nah. ii. 2.

5 God is gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.

6 Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises.

‖ Or, every one *that hath understanding.*

7 For God *is* the King of all the earth: sing ye praises ‖with understanding.

‖ Or, *The voluntary of the people are gathered* unto *the people of the God of Abraham.*

8 God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness.

9 ‖The princes of the people are gathered together, *even* the people of the God of Abraham: for the shields of the earth *belong* unto God: he is greatly exalted.

PSALM XLVIII.

The ornaments and privileges of the church.

A Song *and* Psalm ‖for the sons of Korah. ‖ Or, *of.*

GREAT *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, *in* the mountain of his holiness.

2 Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, *is* mount Zion, *on* the sides of the north, the city of the great King.

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5. *God is gone up*] God is said to come down when He interposes for the deliverance of His people, or the overthrow of their enemies; and "to go up," returning to His heavenly throne, when that work is accomplished. All these expressions have their special and literal fulfilment in the SON. Compare Ps. lxviii. 18, and Eph. iv. 8—10.

with a shout] Amidst the jubilant shouts of His rescued people.

trumpet] See 2 Chro. xx. 28, "They came to Jerusalem with psalteries and harps and *trumpets* unto the house of the LORD." There may also be a reference to the solemn procession when the ark was brought to Mount Zion, 2 S. vi. 15. The same words are there used, "David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark with *shouting* and with the sound of the *trumpet*."

7. *King of all the earth*] In Zech. xiv. 9, the same expression is used with reference to the manifestation of the Lord on the day of judgment.

sing ye praises with understanding] The Hebrew expression is specific, indeed, so to speak, technical; it means "play on the harp a hymn of instruction," marking the special intention of the psalm, which is to inculcate practical and spiritual lessons. Cf. 1 Cor. xiv. 15.

8. *reigneth*] Or, **is King**, *i.e.* hath manifested His kingly power. Cf. Ps. xxii. 28, and 1 Chro. xvi. 31.

9. *The princes*] This translation is quite correct. The word properly means "noble," "generous" in character; but it is used of princes, not, however, without reference to the qualities which become them, and which they may have manifested on the occasions which are celebrated in these psalms. Cf. Judg. v. 9.

even the people] The statement appears to be, Princes of peoples (sc. foreign or heathen nations) are assembled, as a people of the God of Abraham. In other words, all princes of high and generous character, all noble spirits, will be converted, and form one nation, acknowledging the God of Abraham, becoming thus "a chosen generation," "a royal priesthood." See Exod. xix. 6; and 1 Pet. ii. 9.

the shields] *i.e.* the defenders, or rulers. The same metaphor is used by Hosea, iv. 18; see marg.

This psalm is a striking instance of the combination of the lyrical and prophetical elements: while celebrating a transaction of immediate interest to God's people, the Psalmist uses expressions throughout which have their adequate fulfilment in the Person and work of the Messiah.

PSALM XLVIII.

This psalm belongs to the same series, and refers to the same circumstances as the two preceding. It completes the train of grateful thoughts suggested by the deliverance. In the first the overthrow of the enemy is the prominent thought, and in the second the triumph of God's glory; in this the Psalmist turns his thoughts to the beauty, security, and splendour of the city of God.

The structure resembles that of the preceding psalm; the eighth verse, with Selah, is between two strophes, each of three verses.

The Levites sang this psalm at the morning sacrifice on the second day of the week. See Mishna, 'Thamid.'

1. *greatly to be praised*] Or, **greatly praised**. The Psalmist speaks of praise not only due to God, but offered to Him by a grateful people.

mountain of his holiness] **His holy mountain**; cf. Ps. ii. 6, lxxxvii. 1; Isai. ii. 3.

2. *for situation*] Literally, "for elevation," or "in height." The word seems to denote a graceful wavelike height: not rugged and precipitous, but rising by a succession of beautiful terraces. See Note below.

the joy of the whole earth] Thus Jeremiah, "Is this the city that men call the perfec-

3 God is known in her palaces for a refuge.

4 For, lo, the kings were assembled, they passed by together.

5 They saw *it*, *and* so they marvelled; they were troubled, *and* hasted away.

6 Fear took hold upon them there, *and* pain, as of a woman in travail.

7 Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind.

8 As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the LORD of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever. Selah.

9 We have thought of thy lovingkindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple.

10 According to thy name, O God, so *is* thy praise unto the ends of the earth: thy right hand is full of righteousness.

11 Let mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgments.

12 Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof.

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tion of beauty, the joy of the whole earth?" Lam. ii. 15.

on the sides of the north] *i.e.* to the north of Zion is situate the city of which God is in a special sense the King, as dwelling there in the Temple, His Palace: cf. Matt. v. 35. This appears to be the meaning of a somewhat obscure passage. The beauty and glory of Zion, the residence of Judah's earthly sovereigns, is great, but surpassed by the city built around the Palace of its heavenly King. For the phrase cf. Isai. xiv. 13; Ezek. xxxviii. 6, 15, where A. V. has "north quarters." See Note below.

3. *God is known*] *i.e.* He hath manifested Himself as the Protector of Zion, dwelling in her palaces. Compare Ps. xlvi. 5.

4. *the kings were assembled*] This clearly refers to an invasion of Judah by confederated kings, who were discomfited without a battle; and it strongly confirms the view stated in the introduction to Ps. xlvi.

they passed by] It is not clear whether this refers to an advance of the confederates towards Jerusalem, or to their sudden overthrow; the former interpretation seems to agree better with the context. The princes advanced, they saw the glorious city, they marvelled, were troubled, and fled in terror and confusion. From 2 Chro. xx. 20, we find that the invaders were encamped at Tekoa, whence, though at a considerable distance, they had a view of Jerusalem: Delitzsch.

7. *the ships of Tarshish*] See note on 1 K. x. 22. The mention of ships in connection with an invasion of Palestine is difficult to account for; but the Psalmist may possibly allude to the destruction of the combined fleet of Jehoshaphat and Ahaziah at Ezion-Geber. See 1 K. xxii. 48, and 2 Chro. xx. 35—37. In that case we have an instance either of a well-timed warning, such as was given to Jehoshaphat by Eliezer, or of a seasonable reminiscence in the midst of a national exultation. Fürst ('Geschichte der biblischen Literatur,' p. 385) supposes this to refer to a defeat of a piratical fleet of Greek or Cyprian ships by Sennacherib, B.C. 705; but it is exceedingly improbable that the writer of this psalm should thus commemorate a victory of the invaders of Judea. Köster assumes that the Psalmist alludes to a destruction of an auxiliary fleet of Phœnicians not recorded in history.

The passage "Thou breakest," &c., is generally taken as a comparison, "Thou breakest them as Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish;" but the statement of a fact seems more appropriate and forcible, and involves no strain upon the grammatical construction.

8. *God will establish it for ever*] A prophecy of which the literal fulfilment is looked for by those who believe in a future restoration of Israel, according to the flesh, but which is truly and adequately accomplished in the perpetuity of the Church, of which Jerusalem was a type. See Isai. ii. 2, 3; Mic. iv. 1, 2; Rev. xxi. 9, 10.

9. *We have thought*, &c.] Lit. "We have imaged," *i.e.* bodied it forth, or, as we should say, vividly realized. Compare the prayer of Jehoshaphat, "in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD," immediately before the overthrow of the invaders, and the account given of the solemn praises then offered by the Levites of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korahites, 2 Chro. xx. 5—19.

10. *According to thy name*] *i.e.* wherever God's Name is known, and its significance manifested by such deeds of might and goodness, His praise will be declared.

11. *the daughters of Judah*] Either, according to some of the later commentators (Hupfeld, Delitzsch), the cities of Judah, or literally, the maidens and women of Judah, who always took a prominent part in national acts of thanksgiving. See Ex. xv. 20; Ps. lxviii. 25.

12. *Walk*, &c.] This address to the Israelites, not to the enemies as some would take it, agrees

† Heb. *Set your heart to her bulwarks.* ‖ Or, *raise up.*

13 †Mark ye well her bulwarks, ‖consider her palaces; that ye may tell *it* to the generation following.

14 For this God *is* our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide *even* unto death.

remarkably with the account of the triumphant entry of Jehoshaphat into Jerusalem, 2 Chro. xx. 27, 28. The people are invited to observe the strength of the city, its bulwarks and towers, and the grandeur of its buildings, and thus to realize the extent and completeness of their deliverance.

13. *Mark ye well*] Literally, "Set your heart upon her well," observe closely the strength of the fortifications. Cf. Job vii. 17.

consider] The Hebrew word occurs in no other passage. It probably means, not "raise up," as in the margin of our Bibles, but "observe one by one," literally "distribute." Each noble building will suggest fresh motives for grateful joy. Compare Isai. xxxiii. 18.

14. *unto death*] The last two words are generally admitted to rest on insufficient authority; the psalm ends probably with the words "He will be our guide." Delitzsch, Hitzig, and other critics, take Al-muth to be a musical term, denoting the tune; in that case it would either be an exception to the general rule, coming at the end of the psalm, as in Hab. iii. 19, instead of the beginning, as elsewhere throughout this book; or it may be misplaced, belonging probably to the next psalm.

NOTE on PSALM XLVIII. 2.

יַרְכְּתֵי צָפוֹן means, according to Hebrew usage, the extremity of the north, the portion situated on the north. Many modern critics (Gesenius, Hitzig, Fürst, 'G. b. L.' II. p. 385) see in this a designation of the supposed residence of deities in the north, as though the Psalmist compared, or rather identified, Zion with the "mount of the congregation, on the sides of the north" (Isai. xiv. 13), where the king of Babylon, in accordance with Asiatic mythology, hopes to ascend. But there is no indication here of any comparison, and the construction, as Hupfeld shews, presents insuperable difficulties, nor is there any probable ground for the assumption that an Israelite could think of identifying Zion with a heathen Olympus. Delitzsch gives the interpretation which is adopted in the footnote. Perowne observes that we have evidently a topographical designation, and adds: "If Zion be the peak now levelled on the north of the Temple mount," as Fergusson ('Essay,' p. 55 ff.) and Thrupp ('Ancient Jerusalem,' p. 17 ff.) suppose, "'the Mount Zion (on) the sides of the north' may be the true rendering here." But this theory of the topography of Jerusalem is not sustained by later investigations, which place the Palace of David south of the Temple.

PSALM XLIX.

1 *An earnest persuasion to build the faith of resurrection, not on worldly power, but on God.*
16 *Worldly prosperity is not to be admired.*

‖ Or, *of.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm ‖for the sons of Korah.

HEAR this, all *ye* people; give ear, all *ye* inhabitants of the world:

2 Both low and high, rich and poor, together.

PSALM XLIX.

This psalm contains the most perfect development of Hebrew thought on the deepest problem of existence. It affirms clearly the doctrine of a future state of compensation, and establishes it on the strongest grounds. It is altogether didactic, resembling in style and rhythm the book of Proverbs, in brief, compact, and highly poetic sentences, adapted for solemn recitation with lyric accompaniment: it brings together a series of striking thoughts on the present and future condition of men "who trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches." Through life they prosper, leave a rich inheritance to their children, look forward to the permanence and grandeur of their posterity, who laud their names and approve their sayings: but with the end of life comes the end of all: they are the prey of death, wise and fools alike: their noble forms rot in the grave, and they have no futurity of light (19). The righteous, on the contrary, is redeemed from death (15), taken unto Himself by God: and in the morning he will have dominion over them. The contrast is complete: in this life the wicked has everything, even the hope of permanent prosperity for his family, but for him there is no hope after death: the righteous in this life may have absolutely none but evil days, may be beset by treacherous foes (5), but he is sure of redemption, of acceptance with God, of a morning ushering in the dominion of light.

The date of the psalm is uncertain, but,

3 My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart *shall be* of understanding.

4 [a] I will incline mine ear to a parable: I will open my dark saying upon the harp.

5 Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, *when* the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about?

6 They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches;

7 None *of them* can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him:

8 (For the redemption of their soul *is* precious, and it ceaseth for ever:)

[a] Ps. 78. 2. Matth. 13. 35.

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judging from style, colouring, and tone of thought, it belongs to the latter portion of the grand gnomic age of Hebrew poetry, beginning with David, attaining its development under Solomon, and lasting, with intervals of obscurity and brightness, to the great development of prophecy under Hezekiah. It resembles those psalms which are attributed to Asaph, or bear the names of the sons of Korah, but are unconnected with historical events. There is a strong resemblance between it and the book of Job, which the Psalmist must have studied deeply; but the problem there proposed is here solved, and the yearnings there expressed are satisfied by the declaration (*v.* 15) that God will redeem the soul of the righteous from the power of the grave, and receive him unto Himself. See Introd. § 17.

The structure is clearly marked, 1—4, introductory strophe; the refrain (at *vv.* 12 and 20) closes two strophes each of eight verses, but somewhat irregular in arrangement.

1. *all ye people*] Or, **peoples**: the psalm is addressed to all nations, it deals with universal truths: a term specially characteristic of the Solomonian period, or what is sometimes called the school of Hebrew wisdom (chochma).

world] The Hebrew denotes transitoriness; the world of time and sense: cf. Ps. xvii. 14.

2. *low and high*] Literally, "sons of *Adam*, and sons of *ish*." *Adam* corresponds to homo, ἄνθρωπος, and *ish* to vir, ἀνήρ. Our language has no corresponding terms, and the A.V. expresses the real meaning.

3. "My mouth shall speak wisdom; the meditation of my heart shall be understanding." The heart is not represented as producing, but as reflecting upon, the truth suggested to it for meditation; hence in the following verse the Psalmist speaks of himself as listening to the parable.

4. *parable*] Or, "proverb;" the Hebrew word "mashal" comprehends all instructions, sayings, proverbs, allegories, or parables.

open my dark saying] By "dark saying" the Psalmist means figurative words conveying a hidden, mysterious meaning (in Ezek. xvii. 2 the A.V. has "riddle," thus Aq. αἴνιγμα). He opens them, as a merchant opens a casket of jewels, not exactly explaining them, but bringing them into notice: they are truths which, though dark, unknown to the sensual man, need only to be stated to command attention, and convey instruction.

upon the harp] Or, **with the harp**, *i.e.* with a musical accompaniment. This marks the character of the poem, lyrical or didactic: not like the preceding hymns, to be sung by choirs of Levites, but solemnly recited by one teacher.

5. *Wherefore should I fear*] This is the subject-matter of the dark saying, or enigma: the same which is proposed, and but partially solved, in Job.

in the days of evil] This marks a time of personal, perhaps of national calamity.

when the iniquity of my heels] This translation is literal, and may be retained, but the meaning is disputed. If "my heels" were equivalent to "my steps," *i.e.* "of my false steps," errors or sins, the Psalmist would attribute his misfortunes to his own misconduct; but, common as such a view is in the psalms, and true in itself, it seems out of place here: hence most commentators take the word "heels" to be equivalent to "supplanters," treacherous enemies ever on the watch to trip up a man's heels: and this appears to be at once the most natural and defensible construction; compare the name Jacob. Thus Ewald, and Hitzig, who quotes Josh. viii. 13. Hupfeld objects that the word rendered "heels" cannot be a personal or appellative noun, but Del. meets this by instancing similar forms.

7. *None of them*] The point is in the word "brother." No man can redeem one who is but another self, sharer of the same nature. "Redeem" is equivalent to save from the great enemy "death:" but it may mean either from dying, or from the punishment which follows death. In this psalm the meaning is determined by *v.* 15, which cannot possibly have the former meaning. Once dead the rich man belongs altogether to death, and will remain its captive and prey for ever. Dr Kay observes truly that a man might redeem his brother from temporal servitude. Lev. xxv. 48, "after he is sold, he may be redeemed again; *one of his brethren may redeem him.*"

give to God a ransom for him] Death is but the gaoler or the prison; the ransom must

9 That he should still live for ever, *and* not see corruption.

10 For he seeth *that* wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others.

11 Their inward thought *is*, *that* their houses *shall continue* for ever, *and* their dwelling places † to all generations; they call *their* lands after their own names.

† Heb. *to generation and generation.*

12 Nevertheless man *being* in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts *that* perish.

13 This their way *is* their folly: yet their posterity † approve their sayings. Selah.

† Heb. *delight in their mouth.*

14 Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their ‖ beauty shall consume ‖ in the grave from their dwelling.

‖ Or, *strength.* ‖ Or, *the grave being an habitation to every one of them.*

15 But God will redeem my soul

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be one which God accepts, and God is the only Redeemer. Ransom is thus used Job xxxvi. 18, 19, and xxxiii. 24. It is a word which occurs once only in the psalms: in Num. xxxv. 31, the A.V. has "satisfaction."

8. *the redemption...precious*] So costly that it cannot be achieved, see Job xxxvi. 18, 19; when the fatal blow is once inflicted "*then a great ransom cannot deliver thee.*"

and it ceaseth] Or, "and he gives it up," *i.e.* abandons the attempt; then each man once lost will remain unredeemed for ever: no mediation will avail, or be thought of, hereafter.

9. The connection of this verse with the preceding is rather obscure. It may be expressed by a paraphrase; the rich man must abandon all hope that any ransom can be found which will deliver him for ever from the grave. As for hope after death, it does not enter at all into his calculation.

not see corruption] Cf. Ps. xvi. 10. Moses Haddarshon (about 1000 A.D.) has an observation on this verse of importance in its bearing upon Jewish controversy: "Our Rabbins teach that this verse speaks of King Messiah, who will die, redeem the Patriarchs, and then live for ever without seeing corruption." Sepp, 'Leben Jesu,' Vol. VI. p. 517.

10. This verse is a continuation from *v.* 7. The observation of universal mortality leaves no place for hope—the wise die, the fool perishes, their wealth goes to others: but this argument would be utterly pointless had not the just man a different and unfailing hope after death.

11. *Their inward thought is*] This expresses the sense of the Hebrew, which is singularly forcible; it means that their whole inner man (see *v.* 9) is filled with one thought: they know they must die, but then their houses will stand for many generations, their lands will bear their name, and preserve their memory; cf. Ps. x. 6, and Gen. iv. 17. The Psalmist does not deny this, nor dwell on the frequent disappointment of the hope; he reverts to the one certain and universal fact, stated in the next verse. See Note below.

12. *abideth not*] Literally, "passeth not the night," which is generally taken to mean does not remain for any considerable time in a state of honour; but the more forcible and obvious sense is, that he will by no means repose in honour: the sleep of death will be mere corruption; see *v.* 14 and *v.* 20.

13. The most probable meaning of this rather obscure verse is, "this is the way of men who are self-confident, and of those after them who approve their sayings;" the rendering in the text is however defensible, and gives a good and true sense. The Selah marks the climax, viz. that they should feel such utterly foolish confidence and transmit their notions to their posterity.

14. *Like sheep*] As sheep lie down in the fold at night, so man lies down in the grave: then death is his shepherd; but in the morning, which follows the night of death, comes an awakening, and then the righteous will reign over the wicked.

death shall feed on them] Rather, "death will tend them," be their shepherd. LXX. ποιμανεῖ αὐτούς.

have dominion] This is the true meaning of the word. It occurs frequently, and with scarcely an exception in the same sense. Whether the Psalmist realized the truth of an everlasting dominion assured to God's saints after the general resurrection may be questioned, but no other interpretation meets the plain and literal statement in this verse. Cf. Ps. xvii. 15; Dan. vii. 22, xii. 2; 1 Cor. vi. 2.

and their beauty] Literally, "and their form is for the destruction of Hell," or Sheol: *i.e.* their form with its beauty and grandeur will fall into utter dissolution in Sheol, the state of which the grave is the entrance.

from their dwelling] *i.e.* so that no one of them will have any dwelling: a bitter irony of their hope that their houses will endure for ever.

The objections to this construction urged by Hitzig are forcible; with a change of punctuation he renders the clause thus, "and their form withers, Sheol is their dwelling-place."

‖ Heb. *from the hand of the grave.* ‖ Or, *hell.*

†from the power of ‖the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah.

16 Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased;

b Job 27. 19.

17 bFor when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him.

† Heb. *in his life.*

18 Though †while he lived he blessed his soul: and *men* will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself.

† Heb. The soul *shall go.*

19 †He shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light.

20 Man *that is* in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts *that* perish.

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15. In grand contrast to all this stands the hope of the righteous. God will redeem him from the hand of Sheol, death has put forth his hand and seized him, but is forced to surrender his captive, for God takes him to Himself (cf. Gen. v. 24). This is the plain meaning. To suppose that the Psalmist speaks of deliverance before death is absurd: such a hope would put him on a level with the merest fool, who knows at least that redemption from the universal doom is impossible. It is satisfactory to find those critics who are least inclined to admit anticipations of the Gospel in the Old Testament agreed in this interpretation. None defends it more forcibly than Hupfeld. He says truly that it is not stated as a revealed doctrine, but as a presentiment, a deep inward conviction inseparable from real living faith in a living God. See also Introd. to Job, § 7; and Cremer, 'Wörterbuch der Neutest. Gräcität,' p. 67.

16. *Be not thou afraid*] This conclusion repeats and confirms the general lessons of the psalm: these words answer the question of *v.* 5; all ground for misgiving is removed when the future state of the man of the world is considered.

when one] Or, **when a man**, *i.e.* a great man: see note on *v.* 2. *Ish* is here used.

18. *while he lived*] Literally, **in his life**, that life which to him was all in all, to which his hopes and joys were confined.

he blessed his soul] *i.e.* congratulated himself on his prosperity, and indulged all his appetites: see Ps. x. 3, and compare the address of the rich man to his soul, Luke xii. 19.

and men will praise thee] A fine point in the sarcasm: the rich man's self-congratulations are echoed by his neighbours; they admire his luxury, his self-indulgence, and repeat his axioms. It is remarkable how the Psalmist exhausts the subject; of all trials to the faith of thoughtful observers none is greater than to see the "honour, reverence, and troops of friends" which surround the rich man, as such, to the very end.

when thou doest well to thyself] *i. e.* livest in good cheer, as Eccl. xi. 9, where A.V. has "let thy heart cheer thee."

19. *He shall go*] Or, **She**, *i.e.* the soul (which he thought so happy) shall go to the place where his fathers await him.

they] *i.e.* he and his fathers, all who live like him, and die like him.

never] Or, **they shall not see light for evermore.** There is the one point of difference hereafter; the blackness of Sheol will be their portion eternally; but the just will see light in God's light. See Ps. xxxvi. 9.

20. *Man...understandeth not*] In *v.* 10, the Psalmist quotes the common saying that wise or foolish all alike die; here he states that they only who live in honour without reflecting (who do not "so number their days as to apply their hearts unto wisdom") resemble the beasts that perish; dying without hope of an hereafter.

NOTE on Psalm xlix. 11.

For קִרְבָּם the Chaldee, LXX., and Syr. read קִבְרֵם, their grave, a reading easily substituted, and giving by itself a fair sense—their graves are their homes for ever; but the text is preferable, and suits the following clause. The construction of this latter clause presents some difficulty, and it has been rendered "men call upon their names upon the earth:" but the A.V., which follows the old Vv. and is supported by most critics, is to be retained.

PSALM L.

1 *The majesty of God in the church.* 5 *His order to gather saints.* 7 *The pleasure of God is not in ceremonies,* 14 *but in sincerity of obedience.*

‖ Or, *for Asaph.*

A Psalm ‖of Asaph.

THE mighty God, *even* the LORD, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.

2 Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.

3 Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.

4 He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people.

5 Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.

6 And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God *is* judge himself. Selah.

7 Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee: I *am* God, *even* thy God.

8 I will not reprove thee for thy

PSALM L.

This is the first of the psalms attributed to Asaph, and the only one in this book: the chief group of Asaphic psalms is in the third book, from 73 to 83. Asaph was the leader and superintendent of the Levitic choirs appointed by David, 1 Chro. xvi. 4, 5. Thus too Hezekiah "commanded the Levites to sing praise to the LORD in the words of David and of Asaph the Seer," 2 Chro. xxix. 30. He and his sons presided over four out of the twenty-four groups, consisting each of twelve Levites, who conducted in turn the musical services of the temple. He lived some years after the accession of Solomon, and his descendants are often mentioned in later reigns. Some psalms which bear his name may possibly have been composed by his descendants, but this grand ode bears all the marks of the golden age of Hebrew poetry. The characteristics of the Asaphic psalms are exceeding solemnity, a lofty judicial tone, with awful warnings and admonitions. God is represented as personally addressing the people (cf. Ps. lxxxi., lxxxii.). The name Jehovah is occasionally used, but, as in the Korahitish psalms, Elohim occurs far more frequently: this writer also combines various names of the Deity, as in *v.* 1.

The central thought of this psalm is the inefficacy of outward sacrifices compared with the offerings of the heart and purity of life. The same principle is distinctly recognized in the Davidic psalms (see xl. 6, 8, lxix. 30, 31, li. 16, 17) and by all the prophets, but is nowhere set forth more explicitly and solemnly than in this psalm; the circumstance that it is the composition of a chief among the Levites, whose whole life was devoted to the temple-service, is specially important, shewing how unfounded is the notion of a spirit of opposition or rivalry between the prophetic and priestly orders in the best days of Israel.

The introduction is unusually long, six verses, ending with Selah; then one ejaculatory verse (7) followed by two strophes (8—15, 16—23).

1. *The mighty God*] Three names of the Deity are given, El, Elohim, Jehovah, partly, as may be supposed, to mark the solemnity of the occasion, partly to indicate the universality of the judgment; God in His might: God in the manifold attributes, or manifestation, of His Being: God as revealed specially to His people by the covenant name, Jehovah.

2. *the perfection of beauty*] Our translators evidently took this as an epithet of Mount Zion, and probably correctly; for though "beauty" is often attributed to the Messiah (see Ps. xlv. 2), it applies rather to the human manifestation than to the divine essence of the Deity. Its application to Mount Zion is justified by many passages, *e. g.* Lam. ii. 15, and Ps. xlviii. 2, where see note.

hath shined] The Hebrew word is specially used of Theophanies, *i. e.* visible manifestations of God's Presence, not of His Person. See Ps. lxxx. 1; Deut. xxxiii. 2.

3. *not keep silence*] Loud thunderings, the voice of God, accompany the Theophany, as in Pss. xviii. 13, xcvii. 2—5; Exod. xix. 16, &c.

a fire] Ps. xxi. 9; cf. Lev. x. 2.

4. *He shall call*] Compare Deut. iv. 26, xxxii. 1; Isai. i. 2; Mic. vi. 2.

5. *my saints*] Literally, "My pious ones." In other passages the word (Heb. *hasidim*) denotes actual, personal piety; here it seems rather to be a general designation of Israelites, as a holy people in virtue of their covenanted relation to God, which is attested by sacrifices. It was the name assumed in the Maccabean period by the strict party afterwards called Pharisees: see Jost, 'Gesch. Judenthums,' Vol. I. 125.

that have made, &c.] Or, **who ratify my covenant with sacrifice**: see Exod. xxiv. 5—8.

6. *And the heavens shall declare*] Or, **the heavens proclaim His righteousness**; *i. e.* they announce His coming to judge the world, and vindicate the course of righteousness.

for God is judge himself] Or, **that God He judgeth**, *i. e.* is now about to declare judgment; cf. Ps. lxxv. 7, lxxvi. 8, 9, both psalms of Asaph.

7. Cf. Isai. i. 2; Ps. lxxxi. 8.

sacrifices or thy burnt offerings, *to have been* continually before me.

9 I will take no bullock out of thy house, *nor* he goats out of thy folds.

10 For every beast of the forest *is* mine, *and* the cattle upon a thousand hills.

11 I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field *are* †mine.

† Heb. *with me.*

12 If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: [a]for the world *is* mine, and the fulness thereof.

[a] Exod. 19. 5. Deut. 10. 14. Job 41. 11. Ps. 24. 1. 1 Cor. 10. 26, 28.

13 Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?

14 Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High:

15 And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.

16 But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or *that* thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?

17 [b]Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee.

[b] Rom. 2. 21, 22.

18 When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and †hast been partaker with adulterers.

† Heb. *thy portion was with adulterers.*

19 †Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit.

† Heb. *Thou sendest.*

20 Thou sittest *and* speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son.

21 These *things* hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether *such an one* as thyself: *but* I will reprove thee, and set *them* in order before thine eyes.

22 Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear *you* in pieces, and *there be* none to deliver.

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8. *continually*] The Hebrew word is specially used of the daily sacrifices offered in the sanctuary. In this respect no fault is imputed to the people. The whole psalm assumes the regular observance of the ceremonial law. Cf. 1 S. xv. 22; Jer. vii. 22.

12. *the world*, &c.] See 1 Cor. x. 26, 28; Ps. xxiv. 1.

14. *Offer unto God thanksgiving*] Literally, "sacrifice thanksgiving:" *i.e.* instead of the legal "sacrifice of peace offerings for a thanksgiving or a vow" (see Lev. vii. 11—16) the true worshipper must offer that which the victim represents, viz. praise from a grateful heart, and all duties to which he is bound by the terms of his covenant with God. This does not imply that the outer forms are to be omitted, but that they are valueless, except as the expression of genuine devotion and obedience to God's will. The reader must always bear in mind the Hebrew idiom, which, if taken literally, would seem to condemn that which it simply represents as of subordinate and conditional importance. It must not be supposed that this view implies a more advanced stage of religious consciousness than is found in the Pentateuch; for in that book all the obligations of the law are summed up in circumcision of the heart, and duty to God and man resting on the one great central principle of love. See Deut. xxx. 6, 16, and compare Prov. xxi. 3; Hos. vi. 6; Mic. vi. 6—8; Isai. i. 11—15, &c.

15. *thou shalt glorify me*] Rashi, quoted by Dr Kay, "for this is My glory, that I save them that trust in Me."

16. *the wicked*] A different class of persons is now addressed, wilful transgressors, who still claim the privileges of God's people. Traces of the persuasion that no guilt completely abrogated the rights of Israelites are found in all ages of the national history.

17. *thou hatest*] The first characteristic of utter wickedness is inward alienation, followed by open rejection of the moral law.

18. *thou consentedst*] Or, "hadst pleasure;" this denotes a higher degree in guilt than even the commission of sin. Thus St Paul, "who not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." Rom. i. 32.

hast been partaker] Rather, **and with adulterers is thy portion.** Thou sharest their condition, their feelings and their fate.

19. *Thou givest*] Literally, "sendest," *i. e.* lettest it loose, givest it free play. Cf. Job xxx. 11; Jas. ch. iii.

20. *thou slanderest*] "Thou utterest slander against." The Hebrew word, which occurs only in this passage, means "thrust" in Arabic, and corresponds to the Greek "scandal," that which causes a man to fall, overthrows his projects or character.

21. *and I kept silence*] Because God kept silence, did not at once openly punish the sin, the transgressor held Him to be wholly indifferent or even disposed to favour the sinner. Cf. Job xxi. 14, 15; Eccles. viii. 11.

thou thoughtest] Or, "didst imagine." Cf. Ps. xlviii. 9, where the same word is used.

22. *lest I tear*, &c.] Cf. Ps. vii. 2.

23 Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him †that ordereth *his* conversation *aright* will I shew the salvation of God.

† Heb. *that disposeth* his *way.*

PSALM LI.

1 *David prayeth for remission of sins, whereof he maketh a deep confession.* 6 *He prayeth for sanctification.* 16 *God delighteth not in sacrifice, but in sincerity.* 18 *He prayeth for the church.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, [a] when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bath-sheba.

[a] 2 Sam. 11. 2. & 12. 1.

HAVE mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin *is* ever before me.

4 Against thee, thee only, have I

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23. *that ordereth his conversation aright*] Lit. as marg., "that disposeth his way," *i. e.* ordereth his way of life by the rule of duty. Cf. Gal. vi. 16. Symm. τῷ εὐτάκτως ὁδεύοντι.

will I shew] Or, "I will make him look with joy;" a common idiom in the Davidic psalms; see note on Ps. xxii. 17.

PSALM LI.

This begins a series of fifteen psalms, which are attributed in the inscriptions to David, most of them with unusually full notice of the circumstances under which they were composed. They are remarkable for the prevalent, though not exclusive, use of the divine name Elohim instead of Jehovah. In this psalm the fact may possibly be accounted for by David's feeling that his great sin had endangered, if not suspended for a season, the privileges assured to God's people by the covenant name: he might not plead that before his entire restoration to God's favour. The psalm is said in the inscription to have been written just at the time when Nathan came to rebuke him for the terrible guilt which he had contracted. This is confirmed by the strongest internal evidence: of no other person known from Holy Scripture can it be affirmed, that he was a devout man before and after a grievous fall, that his fall involved blood-guiltiness, that the crime was unpunished by law, and that he was restored to God's favour. The depth of penitence, and the fervour of devotion, are specially characteristic of David. The psalm consists of four parts; first, 1—4, ardent prayer for mercy and forgiveness founded upon unreserved confession of guilt, and acknowledgment of God's justice; secondly, 5—12, entreaty for restoration to favour and renewal of spirit; thirdly, 13—16, vows of spiritual sacrifice as the only one truly acceptable to God; and it winds up with a prayer for Zion, and the building of the walls of Jerusalem. The last part is supposed by many critics, some of unquestionable soundness, to have been added after the exile; but see note on *v.* 18.

This psalm has been adopted by the Church in all ages as that which expresses best and most fully the true spirit of penitence. Our Church uses it on Ash Wednesday, and inserts portions of it in her most solemn services.

Nathan] See 2 S. xii.

1. *Have mercy*] The prayer for forgiveness reposes wholly upon the grace of God. David does not yet venture to use the name of Jehovah; that will come when the prayer has been answered. In this psalm the cloud hangs over the sanctuary, though the divine light shines through it, and inspires hope.

mercy, lovingkindness] The first word is strong; it implies kindness, graciousness; but the second is much stronger; it speaks of deep, tender, parental sympathy, of an abundance and overflow of those feelings which assure the penitent child of his mother's unalterable love, of her yearnings for his return to her bosom. So great a sin could not be blotted out but by a great outpouring of grace.

blot out] The word implies total erasure, as of a writing from a tablet. Cf. Ex. xxxii. 32; Isai. xliii. 25, xliv. 22. David first prays for justification in its primary sense of deliverance from the imputation of guilt. See Ps. xxxviii.

transgressions] Not "transgression." David's great sin did not stand alone; adultery was followed by treachery and murder. He uses three distinct words for his guilt—transgressions, iniquity, and sin, involving every kind and degree of guilt: see note on Ps. xxxii. 1.

2. *Wash me throughly*] This is more than justification. The washing takes out the impurity, the soul is cleansed by it. Our version expresses the sense of the original, which, however, is even more forcible, implying reiterated washing.

cleanse] The word used in Lev. xiii. 6—24.

3. *For*] On his own side David has nothing to plead, no excuse, no palliation, only unreserved confession: but that one word "for" involves a sure hope. God will not reject a prayer offered in such a spirit. See Ps. xxxii. 5; Prov. xxviii. 13; 1 John i. 9.

sinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight:
[b] Rom. 3. 4. [b] that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest.

5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity;
[†] Heb. *warm me.* and in sin did my mother [†] conceive me.

6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden *part* thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

[c] Lev. 14. 6. Numb. 19. 18. 7 [c] Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8 Make me to hear joy and gladness; *that* the bones *which* thou hast broken may rejoice.

9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew [‖] a right spirit within me.
[‖] Or, *a constant spirit.*

11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

12 Restore unto me the joy of thy

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sin] David uses here, and in all the psalms which refer to his great guilt, three words, which comprise all the characteristics of sin committed by an offender against God's law, save one, that of wilful impenitent wickedness. Our A.V. is generally careful in observing the distinction: "iniquity" (*avon*), or "perversity;" "transgression" (*pesha*), the breach of God's law; "sin" (*hattath*), as a defilement. He does not use the word wickedness (*resha*), nor is it in any case imputed to a servant of God. Cf. Pss. xxxii. 1, 2, xxxviii. 18, xxxix. 8—11, xl. 12.

4. *Against thee, thee only*] The word "only" is striking, considering how David had cruelly injured his fellow-men, and the terrible results of his guilt: but sin, as such, is directed primarily against God. His law is broken, His name dishonoured, and the special heinousness even of such offences as that of David consists in their antagonism to God's will. At the same time the Hebrew idiom must be remembered, which represents secondary and subordinate objects as absolutely nothing compared with the first and highest. Whatever guilt David might have contracted towards man, in the mind of a true Israelite it was absolutely nothing compared with his sin against God.

that thou mightest, &c.] *i.e.* David confesses his guilt unreservedly, in order that he may admit the justice of whatever sentence God may pronounce. "Justified" is taken in the true forensic sense of being just in fact and appearance, of being, and of being acknowledged to be, righteous. This recognition of God's righteousness is the first and most certain proof that a man is in a true position, and is capable of justification. Justify God by admitting that man has no hope whatever but in His free forgiveness, that nothing is due to man but punishment, and He will justify man by taking away the imputation of sin. Needless difficulty is raised by connecting the words "that thou mightest," &c., with the commission of guilt, instead of the confession.

5. From the special confession of sin David passes to the acknowledgment of inherent and inherited sinfulness. He does not plead this as an excuse or palliation, but as the ground and origin of his actual sin.

shapen] Or, "brought forth:" he came into the world with the taint of iniquity; nay more, the very origin of his existence was corrupt; his mother was a sinner when she conceived him. David does not regard the act of conception as sinful in itself, but accidentally, as the act of a sinful nature.

6. *inward parts*] The Hebrew word occurs only here and Job xxxviii. 36; according to the Rabbis, followed by Gesenius, it means the kidneys, as the seat of deep inward affections; but the A.V. is probably correct, in the inward parts, in the innermost consciousness.

7. *with hyssop*] *i.e.* as with hyssop, which was used in Levitical purifications, as after touching a corpse (Num. xix. 18), and more especially for leprosy. See Lev. xiv. 4—6. David regarded his sinfulness as a moral leprosy, for which the cure was symbolized by the blood sprinkled with the hyssop.

whiter than snow] See Isai. i. 18. This psalm is full of passages bearing the closest resemblance to Isaiah, especially to the later chapters; nor can there be any doubt that the prophet's mind was impregnated with the truths which nowhere find a fuller and more touching expression than in this psalm.

10. The creation of a pure heart, free from the taint and consciousness of sin, is altogether an evangelical doctrine, prefigured in old symbolical rites, but first anticipated by the yearnings of a soul smitten to death by sin. Cf. 1 S. x. 9.

renew a right spirit] **a stedfast spirit**, one not disquieted by fears or doubts, a mind stayed on the Lord, and therefore kept in perfect peace. See Isai. xxvi. 3.

11. *thy holy spirit*] The Spirit whereby David was consecrated to his kingly office, and endued with the gifts and graces requisite for discharging its duties. See 1 S. xvi. 13, where it is said that after he was anointed by

salvation; and uphold me *with thy* free spirit.

13 *Then* will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

† Heb. *bloods.*

14 Deliver me from †bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: *and* my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

15 O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

16 For thou desirest not sacrifice; ‖else would I give *it:* thou delightest not in burnt offering.

‖ Or, *that I should give* it.

17 [d]The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

[d] Is. 57. 15 & 66. 2.

18 Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

19 Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with

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Samuel, "the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward." The Psalmist must also have remembered that at the same time the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and have felt that he had incurred the most imminent danger of a similar abandonment.

12. *the joy of thy salvation*] The holy joy inseparable from the realization of God's saving grace.

with thy free spirit] Or, **let a free spirit sustain me.** The word rendered "free" means willing, generous, spontaneously seeking and urging to goodness. Cf. Ps. liv. 6. In Job xxx. 15 the word is used absolutely for the soul of a good man. The Psalmist prays that his own spirit may become such under divine influence, and sustain him in after trials and temptations.

13. *Then will I teach*] The Hebrew implies a longing, I would fain teach transgressors Thy ways, those who, like me, have committed heinous sins. Such a desire is one of the surest signs of spiritual repentance.

be converted] Or, "return;" David speaks not of conversion from unbelief, but of restoration to a state of grace.

14. *from bloodguiltiness*] Lit. "bloods:" the plural is exclusively used to denote bloodshed or murder: thus Gen. iv. 10. The blood of Uriah cries for vengeance like that of Abel. David cannot have a free spirit unless God silences the accuser. (Hitzig objects that דמים means "bloodshed," not bloodguiltiness, but the reference to Genesis gives a satisfactory explanation. David might well pray to be saved from the blood calling for vengeance.)

15. *O Lord*] Even here David does not use the name Jehovah, but Adonai, *i.e.* Lord, Master.

open thou] Or, **Thou wilt open**; his lips have been closed by guilt; when the conscience is freed, prayers and thanksgivings will flow from it freely and copiously.

16. *thou desirest not*] See introduction. David is speaking of personal guilt: that, he feels, cannot be cleansed by sacrifice. God has no pleasure in sacrifices offered in place of inward contrition.

17. *The sacrifices of God*] *i.e.* those sacrifices which God really approves, and which are the results of His own work. His fatherly chastisement breaks the spirit, which He then pities and accepts. The saying of Samuel (1 S. xv. 22), the passage in Ps. l. 14, and this word, taken together, complete the true principles of sacrificial offerings, which represent obedience, gratitude, and repentance. It was possibly on this account that this psalm was placed by the collector immediately after that of Asaph.

18. This and the following verse are supposed by most of the later commentators, and by some of an earlier age, to have been added during, or immediately after, the Babylonish captivity: but the connection of thought appears sufficiently clear and satisfactory. David has just declared that he puts no trust in sacrifices offered for the expiation of his personal guilt; for himself he has but one offering (unfeigned repentance), but as a king he feels differently: he can promise abundant sacrifices if in His goodness God will complete (*i.e.* enable him to complete) the building of the walls of Jerusalem. The expressions which he uses are exactly appropriate to his own time, when he considerably enlarged the city (2 S. v. 9 and 11), and encompassed the whole with walls, according to Josephus ('Ant.' VII. iii. § 2), who on such a point is not likely to be misinformed. This must have occupied some considerable time, and it has been lately shewn (by Mr Simpson in an excellent article in the 'Christian Observer,' No. 333) that the walls were in progress, probably approaching their completion, just about the time of David's fall. Nothing can be more natural than this allusion under such circumstances, when the king might well feel that his crime might bring with it a punishment which would be detrimental to his people. It must be observed that there is no word which implies that the walls were in ruins; the Psalmist does not speak of rebuilding, but of building; and above all, he makes no mention of the temple, which would have been the

burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

PSALM LII.

1 *David, condemning the spitefulness of Doeg, prophesieth his destruction.* 6 *The righteous shall rejoice at it.* 8 *David, upon his confidence in God's mercy, giveth thanks.*

To the chief Musician, Maschil, *A Psalm* of David, [a] when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, and said unto him, David is come to the house of Ahimelech.

[a] 1 Sam. 22. 9.

WHY boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man? the goodness of God *endureth* continually.

2 Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully.

3 Thou lovest evil more than good; *and* lying rather than to speak righteousness. Selah.

4 Thou lovest all devouring words, ‖ O *thou* deceitful tongue.

‖ Or, and *the deceitful tongue.*

5 God shall likewise † destroy thee for ever, he shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of *thy* dwelling place, and root thee out of the land of the living. Selah.

† Heb. *beat thee down.*

6 The righteous also shall see, and fear, and shall laugh at him:

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first consideration with any devout Israelite after the captivity. That David should close a hymn full of intense personal feelings with a prayer for his country accords well with all that we know of his generous and kingly nature, and shews that he was truly sustained by "a free spirit."

PSALM LII.

This psalm is remarkable for its impetuous and fiery spirit: the writer is full of indignation against a person who is described as mighty, and trusting in riches, an evil speaker, malicious, and deceitful. The utter ruin of that person is predicted or denounced in terms of burning indignation. In the inscription it is said that the psalm was written on an occasion which would account for and justify the bitterness of the writer's spirit: when Doeg the Edomite informed Saul of David's coming to the house of Ahimelech, which led to the cruel massacre of eighty-five priests by the hands of the informer. There is no reason to reject this inscription; little as we know of Doeg's position, yet what is known accords with the notices in the psalm.

The first verse is introductory, then follow five strophes (two verses each), the close of the first and the second being marked by Selah.

1. *O mighty man*] Doeg was the chief of Saul's herdsmen, a position, of course, held by a person of great bodily strength, able to defend his charge against the marauders. He was at Nob, "detained before the Lord" (see 1 S. xxi. 7), an expression which implies that he was undergoing a process of purification, not improbably necessitated by some previous crime.

2. *mischiefs*] Or, **malignity.** The word occurs often in the psalms (see note on v. 9, where the A.V. has "wickedness") in the sense of ruinous, unfathomable evil, destructive malignity.

working deceitfully] Or, "working treachery," as a razor cuts suddenly and without warning, so Doeg, leaving Nob, of course without intimation of hostile purposes, caused the sudden destruction of David's friends. Cf. Ps. v. 9, and lvii. 4.

3. *Thou lovest*] The Psalmist attributes the crime not to any temptation from without, but to an inward and deliberate preference of evil to good. To *love* evil, lying, and malice, is the characteristic of the utter reprobate.

more than good] Or, "instead of good," the true and natural object of love.

4. *devouring words*] This expression again points at the specific result of the malicious tale: devouring words are words that destroy, cause sudden and utter ruin. Compare Ps. xxxv. 25.

5. *likewise*] This imprecation exactly corresponds to Doeg's crime: the divine law is one of exact retribution: he had broken into the house of David's friends, seized them, dragged them forth, rooted them out of the land, and he must undergo the same infliction, not for a time, not for once, but for ever. The force of the imprecation, and of the hope expressed in the following verse, depends upon an inward, if undeveloped, presentiment of a retribution extending beyond the limits of the present life. See Ps. xlix. 14.

thy dwelling place] Lit. "from the tent." This again points distinctly to a shepherd or herdsman.

6. *shall laugh*] The exultation of the righteous at the just punishment of the wicked is frequently described in Holy Scripture. It is inseparable from a hearty and thorough sympathy with God's law. That punishment which it is consistent with God's attributes to inflict, it cannot be inconsistent for His people to view with a stern and holy gratification, utterly distinct from the indulgence of personal feelings of revenge or animosity. It was impossible for David not to desire the punishment of the treacherous murderer, not

7 Lo, *this is* the man *that* made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, *and* strengthened himself in his ‖wickedness.

‖ Or, *substance.*

8 But I *am* like a green olive tree in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever.

9 I will praise thee for ever, because thou hast done *it:* and I will wait on thy name; for *it is* good before thy saints.

PSALM LIII.

1 *David describeth the corruption of a natural man.* 4 *He convinceth the wicked by the light of their own conscience.* 6 *He glorieth in the salvation of God.*

To the chief Musician upon Mahalath, Maschil, *A Psalm* of David.

[a] THE fool hath said in his heart, *There is* no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: [b] *there is* none that doeth good.

[a] Ps. 10. 4. & 14. 1, &c.

[b] Rom. 3. 10.

2 God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were *any* that did understand, that did seek God.

3 Every one of them is gone back: they are altogether become filthy; *there is* none that doeth good, no, not one.

4 Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people *as* they eat bread: they have not called upon God.

5 There †were they in great fear, *where* no fear was: for God hath scattered the bones of him that encampeth *against* thee: thou hast put *them* to shame, because God hath despised them.

† Heb. *they feared a fear.*

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to rejoice in the certainty of retribution. Cf. Pss. xl. 3, lxiv. 8, 9; Job xxii. 19.

7. Here again the Psalmist goes to the root of the evil; it began with alienation from God, was promoted by love of riches, such as Saul would of course heap on his unscrupulous adherent, and attained its full development in a heart strong only in its longings for evil.

wickedness] The same word which in *v.* 2 is rendered A. V. mischiefs. Here it denotes **malignity**, or desire of evil. A man first yields to the desire, then encourages it, until it attains to absolute and exclusive mastery.

8, 9. Each trait of the description of the true servant of God is suggested by the contrast between him and the wicked. They make not God their strength, the Psalmist lives and prospers in God's house: they trust in riches, he in God's mercy: they are wholly given up to evil lusts, he waits only on God's name.

8. *green olive tree*] It is objected to this figure that there is no mention of trees growing in the court of the temple; but the psalm refers to the tabernacle at Nob, which was probably situate on the northern summit of the Mount of Olives, and olives may naturally have formed a grove within its precincts; one more indication of the genuineness of this psalm. The answer that the expression is purely figurative (as in Ps. xcii. 13) is not satisfactory; scriptural figures are taken from realities, and this was doubtless suggested by what the Psalmist had observed in his frequent visits to the sanctuary.

9. *thou hast done it*] Or, "Thou hast done," omitting the word "it;" a very striking expression, here as elsewhere (*e.g.* Ps. xxii. 31) declaring the Psalmist's absolute confidence in the accomplishment of the will of God.

and I will wait, &c.] Or, **and I will wait for Thy name, for it is good, in the presence of Thy saints.** David will wait patiently for the manifestation of goodness, involved in the very name of God, among His faithful and favoured people (*hasidim*); see note on Ps. l. 5. The expression, however, is somewhat obscure. The Syr. "I will proclaim Thy name, that it is good," is more in accordance with the Psalmist's style, and on that ground is adopted by Hupfeld; but such an emendation requires the support of MSS., which is here wanting.

Psalm LIII.

This psalm is nearly identical with the 14th, differing chiefly in the inscription and in the substitution of the name Elohim for Jehovah. There can be little doubt that one is a recension of the other, with some slight alterations, for which it is not easy to give a satisfactory account. See notes on Psalm xiv., and introd. to Psalm xlii.

Mahalath] The word probably means "sickness," and may indicate a melancholy tune, adapted to the sombre strain of thought which pervades the psalm.

5. This verse appears to have been added by a later Psalmist, probably in the time of Jehoshaphat or of Hezekiah, when Jerusalem was saved from imminent ruin by the sudden and miraculous destruction of invading armies.

† Heb. *Who will give salvations*, &c.

6 †Oh that the salvation of Israel *were come* out of Zion! When God bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, *and* Israel shall be glad.

PSALM LIV.

1 *David, complaining of the Ziphims, prayeth for salvation.* 4 *Upon his confidence in God's help he promiseth sacrifice.*

To the chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil, *A Psalm* of David, [a] when the Ziphims came and said to Saul, Doth not David hide himself with us?

[a] 1 Sam. 23. 19. & 26. 1.

SAVE me, O God, by thy name, and judge me by thy strength.

2 Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth.

3 For strangers are risen up against me, and oppressors seek after my soul: they have not set God before them. Selah.

4 Behold, God *is* mine helper: the Lord *is* with them that uphold my soul.

5 He shall reward evil unto †mine enemies: cut them off in thy truth.

† Heb. *those that observe me.*

6 I will freely sacrifice unto thee: I will praise thy name, O LORD; for *it is* good.

7 For he hath delivered me out of all trouble: and mine eye hath seen *his desire* upon mine enemies.

PSALM LV.

1 *David in his prayer complaineth of his fearful case.* 9 *He prayeth against his enemies, of whose wickedness and treachery he complaineth.* 16 *He comforteth himself in God's preservation of him, and confusion of his enemies.*

To the chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil, *A Psalm* of David.

PSALM LIV.

A psalm composed in imminent danger: according to the inscription, which there is no reason to question, when David was betrayed by the Ziphites. See 1 S. xxiii. 19 and xxvi. 1.

The division into two strophes of three and four verses is marked by Selah, *v.* 3.

1. *by thy name*] *i.e.* by the manifestation of the attributes which the name of God signifies; by His goodness, power, truth. Cf. Ps. v. 11, lii. 9.

strength] Or, "might." The Hebrew word is derived from *gibbor*, "hero," an appellation of the God of hosts; see note on Ps. xlv. 3.

3. *strangers*] This translation is quite literal, but the word has the secondary meaning "enemies," cruel and unsympathizing foes, and that is probably the sense in this passage. The Ziphites were Jews, strangers not in blood, but in spirit. It is possible, however, that David may allude to certain foreigners in the army of Saul, such as Doeg the Edomite, and the Cushite, who were among his bitterest enemies. Saul may have specially chosen them as persons unrestrained by any religious feelings, not likely to set God before their eyes.

oppressors] Or, **fierce ones**; the two words, "aliens" and "fierce (A.V. 'terrible') ones," are thus combined by Isaiah, xxv. 5.

seek after my soul] Cf. 1 S. xxiii. 15 and Ps. xxiii. 5, xxvi. 9, 10.

4. *with them*] *i.e.* "among them," "one of them;" a not uncommon idiom (cf. Judg. xi. 35; Ps. cxviii. 7), which does not mean that David has many upholders, of whom God is one, but that He is the one true upholder, on Whom all others depend.

5. *enemies*] Literally, "watchers;" persons who lie in ambush, watching an occasion to destroy their enemy. Cf. Ps. v. 8.

in thy truth] Or, **by Thy truth**; by the manifestation of that faithfulness which is expressed in God's name; see note on *v.* 1.

6. *I will freely sacrifice*] *i.e.* offer a free-will sacrifice, such as a grateful heart willingly offers. The expression is the usual one for sacrifices of thanksgiving. Cf. Num. xv. 3.

I will praise, &c.] Ps. lii. 9.

7. *For he hath delivered me*] The strong faith of the Psalmist realizes the deliverance as already accomplished; he has no hesitation therefore in vowing a sacrifice of thanksgiving.

mine eye hath seen his desire, &c.] Lit. **mine eye hath looked upon mine enemies**, sc. with triumph. For the idiom, which is very common in the psalms, see note on xxii. 17, lix. 10, xcii. 11, cxviii. 7. It occurs twice in the inscription on the Moabitish stone, lines 4 and 7, where Dr Ginsburg has, "I will see my desire on him."

PSALM LV.

This beautiful psalm comes from the very depths of David's heart; it expresses feelings, which give the tone to all the psalms composed about the time when the conspiracy of Absalom was proceeding; and there is every reason for assigning it to that period of David's life. We have first (1—8) a description of the Psalmist's bitter anguish, and longings for deliverance from his slan-

GIVE ear to my prayer, O God; and hide not thyself from my supplication.

2 Attend unto me, and hear me: I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise;

3 Because of the voice of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked: for they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me.

4 My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me.

5 Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath †overwhelmed me. † Heb. *covered me.*

6 And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! *for then* would I fly away, and be at rest.

7 Lo, *then* would I wander far off, *and* remain in the wilderness. Selah.

8 I would hasten my escape from the windy storm *and* tempest.

9 Destroy, O Lord, *and* divide their tongues: for I have seen violence and strife in the city.

10 Day and night they go about it

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derers and enemies, followed (9—23) by alternate imprecations, and prayers, and vivid pictures of signs of an approaching insurrection; one person is singled out as once the dearest and most trusted friend of the king, now become the most bitter and treacherous of his foes; still hope is not quenched; it bursts out with fitful gleams through the psalm, which closes with expressions of perfect confidence in God's justice and love.

Hitzig, who gives a masterly analysis of the psalm, attributes it to Jeremiah, pointing out the flight into the wilderness, Jer. ix. 2, and the possibility that Pashur (Jer. xx. 1, 6) *may* have been an early friend. De Wette and Hupfeld state the obvious objections to this hypothesis; and it seems strange that any should fail to recognize the adaptation to the circumstances of David.

On the general tenour of this and similar psalms see introduction to Ps. xlii.

The ejaculation (*v.* 9) marks the division into two parts: the strophes are somewhat irregular, marking vehemence of feeling.

2. *I mourn in my complaint*] Or, "I wander in my moaning," *i.e.* am tossed about to and fro in the feverish unrest of anxiety and sorrow. The word rendered "mourn" indicates perhaps delirious wandering of spirit.

make a noise] Or, "groan aloud;" the same word is used Ps. xlii. 11. It properly denotes disturbance, uproar; here violent emotion, or groaning. In *v.* 17 it is rendered "cry aloud."

3. *oppression*] The word (which occurs only in this passage) implies that the enemy was in a position which enabled him to drive the Psalmist into "a great strait." Every word suits the condition of David just before his flight; the threats of the conspirators were louder than heretofore; they had long watched him; now they speak out, accuse him of deep criminality, and drive him almost to desperation.

cast iniquity upon me] This probably represents the true sense of the Hebrew, which is somewhat obscure; lit. "cause evil or guilt to fall on me." Cf. 2 S. xvi. 7, 8, "The LORD hath *returned upon thee* all the blood," &c.

5. *horror hath overwhelmed me*] Job xxi. 6, where A.V. has "trembling."

7. *Lo, then would I wander*] Or, **Lo, afar off would I flee, I would lodge in the wilderness.** The same wish is expressed by Jer. ix. 2. The comparison of the two passages brings out the marvellous beauty of this passage, unsurpassed for depth of feeling and exquisite imagery; to which no translation, save that into music by Mendelssohn, can do justice. In his flight from Absalom David did *lodge* in the wilderness. Cf. 2 S. xv. 28, xvii. 16.

8. The last words might mean "more swiftly than stormy wind and tempest;" but our version is quite right: as the dove rushes swiftly to her rocky nest, escaping from the storm, so would David fain flee away from the outburst of furious passions. Dr Kay observes that in 2 S. xv. 14 David says, "Arise, and let us flee; for we shall have no escape (the word here rendered *refuge*) from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he speed and overtake us."

9. The king rouses himself, passing with an abrupt transition from complaining to indignant imprecations.

divide their tongues] The expression is singular, but it is understood to mean a wish that the tongues, which now combine in execrations against David, may be scattered, and the conspiracy broken up; probably with an allusion to the confusion of tongues at Babel. In Gen. x. 25 the same word is used.

violence and strife] The indications of a revolutionary movement, which David had noted, but was evidently unable to suppress. Cf. Jer. vi. 7.

10. An animated description of the excitement of the people, prowling about the walls.

upon the walls thereof: mischief also and sorrow *are* in the midst of it.

11 Wickedness *is* in the midst thereof: deceit and guile depart not from her streets.

12 For *it was* not an enemy *that* reproached me; then I could have borne *it:* neither *was it* he that hated me *that* did magnify *himself* against me; then I would have hid myself from him:

13 But *it was* thou, †a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance.

14 †We took sweet counsel together, *and* walked unto the house of God in company.

15 Let death seize upon them, *and* let them go down quick into ‖hell: for wickedness *is* in their dwellings, *and* among them.

16 As for me, I will call upon God; and the LORD shall save me.

17 Evening, and morning, and at

† Heb. *a man according to my rank.*

† Heb. *Who sweetened counsel.*

‖ Or, *the grave.*

watching, it may be, the approach of confederates, and fixing on points best adapted for an outbreak, or standing in groups here and there in the streets and open places, and preluding the insurrection by acts of violence.

mischief] Or, **iniquity.**

11. *Wickedness*] Or, "destruction" (Ps. v. 10), a vivid personification: the city is become the home of destruction; fraud and treachery do not stir out of her market-place. In the utter corruption of the people David saw the true cause of the triumph of his enemies, and at the same time the assurance of their ultimate discomfiture.

streets] "street," *i. e.* the broad open place near the city-gate, where justice was administered. See notes on Job xxix. 7.

12. Here follows the description of one individual, the leader and originator of the whole movement. Our thoughts are immediately directed to Ahithophel, in whom all the older commentators recognize the original of the portraiture: nor do the objections of modern critics appear to be weighty. Hupfeld considers that this description, and the verses, 20, 21, which complete it, are misplaced, and should follow *v.* 3: but the abruptness of the transition is at once highly poetic, and most natural in the disturbed state of the Psalmist's spirit, who is almost delirious in his grief; see *v.* 2.

it was not an enemy] To this it is objected that Ahithophel had cause of provocation, since Bathsheba is supposed to have been his granddaughter; but the fact, though probable, is not certain; nor is it clear that one so utterly unprincipled and selfish as Ahithophel would have felt, at any rate have shewn, any indignation, when David raised her to the highest rank among his wives. It is said, too, that Ahithophel came to Jerusalem shortly before the outbreak: that is true, but the psalm was composed at that time, and Ahithophel may have long before directed the plans of Absalom, who would not have sought out a trusted follower of his father, had he not been sure of his support.

13. *mine equal*] Literally, "a man according to my estimate or position," but our version expresses the meaning. David speaks of one who is on terms of such intimate familiarity, so honoured and esteemed, as to be justly regarded as an equal; so far of course as could be the case with a subject. The position of Ahithophel fully bears out this view; see 2 S. xv. 12, xvi. 23. "My guide" could not be said with equal propriety of any one but Ahithophel. The Hebrew (alluph) is thus rendered by LXX., Vulg., and has certainly that meaning in Gen. xxxvi. 15. Modern critics generally take it to mean "associate."

acquaintance] Or, confidant.

14. *in company*] Or, **in the throng,** that is, in the midst of the crowd of worshippers. Cf. Ps. xlii. 4, and lxiv. 2 (where A. V. has "insurrection"). David represents himself as choosing one favoured and trusted friend to accompany him and join his devotions at a great national festival. Such a friend he found in one whose counsels were to him as "the oracle of God." See 2 S. xvi. 23.

15. An outburst of fury, which the combination of malignity and hypocrisy in Ahithophel alone could justify.

seize upon them] Or, **surprise them,** come upon them suddenly, in just retribution for their own unforeseen treachery.

quick into hell] Or, "Sheol;" but our version is quite correct, if we remember that, although David may not realize hell as a place of endless torture, he does regard it as the last home of the impenitent. To go quick into hell, is to perish with full consciousness of a miserable fate; not perhaps without an allusion to Korah and his company, Num. xvi. For the fulfilment of the curse see the account of Ahithophel's suicide, 2 S. xvii. 23; and the piercing of Absalom's heart *while he was yet alive*, ib. xviii. 14.

16. Another change of tone, now sweet and solemn, with the name Jehovah, for the first time in the psalm, speaking of inward hope and sure salvation. There may possibly be an allusion to prayers habitually offered

noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.

18 He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle *that was* against me: for there were many with me.

19 God shall hear, and afflict them, even he that abideth of old. Selah. ‖ Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God.

20 He hath put forth his hands against such as be at peace with him: † he hath broken his covenant.

21 *The words* of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war *was* in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet *were* they drawn swords.

22 [a] Cast thy ‖ burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.

23 But thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction: † bloody and deceitful men † shall not live out half their days; but I will trust in thee.

‖ Or, *With whom* also there be *no changes, yet they fear not God.* † Heb. *he hath profaned.*

[a] Ps. 37. 5. Matth. 6. 25. Luke 12. 22. 1 Pet. 5. 7. ‖ Or, *gift.* † Heb. *men of bloods and deceit.* † Heb. *shall not half their days.*

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thrice daily, see Dan. vi. 10, but the Psalmist is speaking now of his unceasing supplication in the time of trial.

18. *from the battle that was against me*] The Hebrew word rendered "battle" occurs once only in the historical books, viz. 2 S. xvii. 11, where it is used by Hushai, David's friend, in reference to an attack on the king. But David here refers to former deliverances. God has given him the victory ofttimes when all seemed lost, and will not fail him now.

19. See Note below. The last clause may be rendered more literally, "who have no changes, and they fear not God," but the meaning is doubtful; it may be "who have hitherto gone on without changes, or reverses of fortune;" see Job xxi. 7—15. The Hebrew word denotes properly changes of succession, such as of one garment or season for another; hence by a natural metaphor vicissitudes of fortune.

20, 21. David reverts suddenly to the fixed and deepest thought in his heart, the treachery of his friend. Deeply as he felt the revolt of his son, that probably did not surprise him; it was in accordance with previous indications of his character, but Ahithophel's treason came on him without any preparation.

20. *broken*] Or, "profaned," evidently with allusion to *v.* 14.

21. *butter*] Literally, "the butters of his mouth are smooth:" his words flow sweet and smooth like cream. Cf. Prov. v. 3, 4.

but war was in his heart] Lit. "but war his heart," *i. e.* **his heart was wholly war**, a very forcible idiom, signifying the complete absorption of the heart by hatred.

22. *thy burden*] The exact meaning of the word, which occurs nowhere else, is uncertain, but our version expresses the sense with sufficient accuracy. It may mean, as suggested in the margin of the A.V., "gift," viz. that which is given, appointed to man to bear. Thus Hupf. See 1 Pet. v. 7, where it is rendered "care." Vulg. curam, LXX. *μέριμνάν σου.*

23. This verse sounds like a prophetic anticipation of the suicide of Ahithophel, and the fate of Absalom (see note *v.* 15); but the Psalmist probably does but express a fixed conviction in the justice of God. Hupfeld again proposes a different arrangement, but abruptness is the characteristic of the psalm. The *last* word recalls the key-note struck in David's earliest psalms, vii. 1, xi. 1.

NOTE on PSALM LV. 19.

Hupfeld renders this verse "God will hear and answer me (וְיַעֲנֵנִי with some MSS.), for He sitteth (as Judge) of old;" the latter clause he supposes to be misplaced, but interprets it as in the foot-note. With a slight change of punctuation, favoured by the LXX., the meaning would be, "God will hear (me) and humble them, and (for) He sitteth (as Judge) of old." The construction, however, is unsatisfactory, and the passage is probably imperfect.

PSALM LVI.

1 *David, praying to God in confidence of his word, complaineth of his enemies.* 9 *He professeth his confidence in God's word, and promiseth to praise him.*

To the chief Musician upon Jonath-elem-rechokim, ‖ Michtam of David, when the [a] Philistines took him in Gath.

‖ Or, *A golden* Psalm *of David.* [a] 1 Sam. 21. 11.

BE merciful unto me, O God: for man would swallow me up; he fighting daily oppresseth me.

2 † Mine enemies would daily swallow *me* up: for *they be* many that fight against me, O thou most High.

† Heb. *Mine observers.*

3 What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.

4 In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.

5 Every day they wrest my words: all their thoughts *are* against me for evil.

6 They gather themselves together, they hide themselves, they mark my steps, when they wait for my soul.

7 Shall they escape by iniquity? in *thine* anger cast down the people, O God.

8 Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: *are they* not in thy book?

9 When I cry *unto thee*, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God *is* for me.

10 In God will I praise *his* word: in the LORD will I praise *his* word.

11 In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.

PSALM LVI.

A psalm of prayer in a time of great affliction: according to the inscription, when David was taken by the Philistines in Gath. It bears every mark of the time when David was a fugitive, and persecuted by bitter enemies: retaining a perfect faith in the word and favour of God.

The divisions are clearly marked by the refrain at *v.* 4 and at *vv.* 10, 11, which are rather to be regarded as one verse. We have thus a beginning and close each of two verses, and three intervening strophes, 2, 3, and 3.

The inscription is obscure; the words Jonath-elem-rechokim mean "the dove of silence (*i.e.* the silent dove) of the far ones," *i.e.* either of far-off lands, or among aliens. It probably designates the tune to which the composition was recited, but is evidently adapted to the circumstances of the Psalmist. The place given to the psalm was probably suggested by its similarity to the preceding.

Michtam] See note on Ps. xvi. The next four psalms have the same designation.

took him in Gath] David's flight to Gath is related in 1 S. xxi. 10. He was received as a friend by Achish, but in great danger from the envy of the Philistine nobles. There is no notice in that passage of his having been actually seized, or taken by them, and doubts have therefore been thrown upon the genuineness or accuracy of this inscription: but it rests probably upon an ancient and independent record; a late compiler would have taken the account without alteration from the book of Samuel. The similarity of tone and structure between this and the following psalm is recognized by keen critics (*e.g.* Köster), as also the adaptation of thought and expression to the circumstances noted in the inscription.

1. *for man*] David uses here the word "*enosh*" (which has always the sense of weakness and fragility), evidently in antithesis to Elohim. He had applied it to Ahithophel in the preceding psalm, *v.* 13.

2. *enemies*] watchers; see note on Ps. liv. 5. This word suits the position of David at Gath.

O thou most High] The Hebrew word *marom*, *i.e.* "height," is thus rendered by most of the older commentators. It is now taken by most critics to mean "in pride," "proudly," "haughtily;" but the old interpretation is more forcible, and quite as near to the original. In either case the expression is elliptical, and has no exact parallel.

4. *In God*] *i.e.* with God's help, by His grace; He will enable me to praise His word, gratefully to acquiesce in His revealed will. The Psalmist's spirit lives and moves in God, as the source of all light and spiritual influence. This is the true refrain, or key-note of the psalm. See *vv.* 10 and 11.

5, 6. This description is singularly applicable to David's position among the envious nobles at the court of Achish. It could not have been written either at the court of Saul (for he was a fugitive, see *v.* 8), or when he was surrounded by stanch comrades in his exile. Still it does not speak of his being actually arrested, and does not therefore seem to have suggested the inscription.

7. *Shall they escape by iniquity?*] The original is very obscure; but if the text be sound it probably has the meaning which is expressed in our version: see Note below.

8. *tellest my wanderings*] *i.e.* God keeps an exact account of David's wanderings, notes every incident of his restless flight. Some commentators, not content with this natural and beautiful thought, would refer "wanderings" to the Psalmist's mental wanderings or complainings; see lv. 2.

into thy bottle] A very bold, but expressive metaphor. As the traveller carefully preserves water, milk, or wine in leather bottles or bladders for a journey, so David trusts that God keeps in memory every tear which he sheds. They are precious as memorials of many a sorrowful pleading, many a prayer offered with streaming eyes.

12 Thy vows *are* upon me, O God: I will render praises unto thee.
13 For thou hast delivered my soul from death: *wilt* not *thou deliver* my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?

12. *Thy vows are upon me*] *i.e.* vows offered to God on occasions of deliverance from grief and danger. See Num. xxx. 6, marg.
13. *light of the living*] See Job xxxiii. 30.

NOTE on PSALM LVI. 7.

The conjecture of Hupfeld, פלט for פלט, is ingenious and probable; but conjectural emendations to elude a difficulty are not adopted by cautious critics. Delitzsch supposes that על און may be equivalent to "in vain," "not at all;" but this is without authority. The sense appears to be "considering their iniquity shall they escape?" על און, upon iniquity, *i.e.* that being their foundation, resting altogether on iniquity.

PSALM LVII.

1 *David in prayer fleeing unto God complaineth of his dangerous case.* 7 *He encourageth himself to praise God.*

To the chief Musician, ‖Al-taschith, Michtam of David, [a]when he fled from Saul in the cave.

‖ Or, *Destroy not.*
[a] 1 Sam. 24. 1.

BE merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until *these* calamities be overpast.
2 I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth *all things* for me.
3 He shall send from heaven, and save me ‖*from* the reproach of him that would swallow me up. Selah. God shall send forth his mercy and his truth.
4 My soul *is* among lions: *and* I lie *even among* them that are set on fire, *even* the sons of men, whose teeth *are* spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.

‖ Or, *he reproacheth him that would swallow me up.*

PSALM LVII.

This psalm closely resembles the preceding It was composed, as we learn from the inscription, "when David fled from Saul in the cave," *i.e.* either the cave at Engedi, in the high limestone ridge to the west of the Dead Sea, or more probably at Adullam, near the district of the Philistines. This historical notice is rejected by some modern critics, but is scarcely open to fair objection; even Köster considers that it is highly probable, and in accordance with the tone and spirit of the composition. The whole psalm is full of the feelings expressed so powerfully in Ps. lvi., and concludes with a strain of exulting and triumphant confidence; on this account it is selected as one of the psalms in our services for Easter Sunday.

The psalm is divided into two parts, distinctly marked by the refrain, 5 and 11; each part has a striking similarity of structure.

Al-taschith] *i.e.* **Destroy not.** Three other psalms (lviii. lix. lxxv.) have the same title, which well expresses their general purport. In this psalm there is evidently a direct allusion to David's answer to Abishai, when he would have slain Saul with the spear, *Destroy him not*, Al-taschithehu.

in the cave] The cave of Adullam. See 1 S. xxii. 1, and 2 S. xxiii. 13.

1. *my soul trusteth in thee*] Or, **takes refuge**; the word is repeated in the next clause.

shadow of thy wings] A beautiful and common figure (see Ps. xvii. 8, and xxxvi. 7), suggested probably by the exquisite passage Deut. xxxii. 11, and adopted by our Lord. See too Ruth ii. 12.

calamities] Literally, "destructions," dangers threatening him on all sides with destruction; cf. Ps. lii. 2. David uses the word in that and in other passages specially of evil machinations.

2. *performeth*] Or, "accomplisheth," here, as in Ps. cxxxviii. 8, in the sense "accomplisheth what is good for me."

3. *from the reproach*] The construction of the clause is obscure. The most probable meaning is, "though he that would swallow me up revileth;" but our A.V. is defensible. See Note below. Cf. Ps. lvi. 1.

4. Here again the meaning is clear, but the construction abrupt and rugged; lit. "As for my soul, in the midst of lions might I lie, for burning are the sons of men." David contrasts his actual condition in the cave where he has found a refuge with the lot which would have been his among the followers of

5 Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; *let* thy glory *be* above all the earth.

6 [b]They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down: they have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen *themselves*. Selah.

7 [c]My heart is ‖fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise.

8 Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I *myself* will awake early.

9 I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations.

10 [d]For thy mercy *is* great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds.

11 Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: *let* thy glory *be* above all the earth.

[b] Ps. 7. 16. & 9. 15.
[c] Ps. 108. 1, &c. ‖ Or, *prepared.*
[d] Ps. 36. 5 & 108. 4.

Saul; here in the lions' den he is far safer. "The sons of men" may refer to Ps. liii. 2.

whose teeth are spears and arrows] Cf. Prov. xxx. 14.

tongue a sharp sword] See Ps. lv. 21.

5. *above the heavens*] *i.e.* let the deliverance be such that heaven and earth may recognize the triumph of righteousness.

6. *they are fallen*] There may be an allusion to Saul's adventure in the cave at Engedi, 1 S. xxiv., but the metaphor is very common in the psalms, see Ps. vii. 15, 16, and ix. 15.

8. *I myself will awake early*] This may be rendered at once more literally and more poetically, "I will wake the morning;" a beautiful figure not confined to Hebrew poetry—thus in Ovid ('Met.' xi. 597, quoted by Hengstenberg) the cock "evocat auroram." This rendering is adopted by Hupfeld and Delitzsch.

NOTES on PSALM LVII. 3, 4.

3. חרף שאפי, lit. either "He revileth the person who persecutes me," or "He that persecutes me revileth." The objection to the former rendering is that חרף is not elsewhere attributed to God; the latter presents an ellipsis and a change of tense scarcely accounted for. Hitzig would alter חרף to מכף, "from the hand." The passage may perhaps be misplaced, but no satisfactory change has been suggested.

4. Several points are overlooked by most translators in this verse. אשכבה implies a wish. The Psalmist desires to lie down. The fact that he was in the cave is forgotten. The accents are certainly incorrect, as all admit; if disregarded we may take להטים (not "blazing," but "burning," *i.e.* "consuming") as a predicate of בני אדם, which gives the sense suggested in the note. Dr Kay divides the clauses differently, but the Masoretic punctuation appears correct.

PSALM LVIII.

1 *David reproveth wicked judges,* 3 *describeth the nature of the wicked,* 6 *devoteth them to God's judgments,* 10 *whereat the righteous shall rejoice.*

To the chief Musician, ‖Al-taschith, Michtam of David.

‖ Or, *Destroy not, A golden Psalm of David.*

DO ye indeed speak righteousness, O congregation? do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?

2 Yea, in heart ye work wickedness; ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth.

PSALM LVIII.

A psalm of stern reproof, such as a king might address to unrighteous judges, the great and permanent evil of oriental despotisms. It belongs probably to the first year of David's reign; the style is rugged and obscure, the tone solemn and earnest, such as might well become a prince succeeding to a period of anarchy and turbulence. He describes the wickedness as so great, so thoroughly identified with the nature of the oppressors, as to leave no hope of improvement, no resource but prayer for their extirpation.

The psalm is assigned to a writer in the time of the exile by some critics, chiefly on the ground that the wicked judges must be heathens. Hupfeld observes truly that similar reproaches are often addressed to judges in Israel. The obscurity of the language points to an early date, nor is there any sufficient reason for rejecting the inscription, found in all the old versions.

1. *O congregation*] The word so ren-

3 The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray †as soon as they be born, speaking lies.

4 Their poison *is* ‖like the poison of a serpent: *they are* like the deaf ‖adder *that* stoppeth her ear;

5 Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, ‖charming never so wisely.

6 Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth: break out the great teeth of the young lions, O LORD.

7 Let them melt away as waters *which* run continually: *when* he bendeth *his bow to shoot* his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces.

8 As a snail *which* melteth, let *every one of them* pass away: *like* the untimely birth of a woman, *that* they may not see the sun.

9 Before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, †both living, and in *his* wrath. †Heb. *as living, as wrath.*

† H-b. *from the belly.*

‖ Heb. *according to the likeness.* ‖ Or, *asp.*

‖ Or, be *the charmer never so cunning.*

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dered is very obscure. Elsewhere it means "silence," "dumbness:" hence some translate "Do ye indeed speak righteousness in silence?" a phrase which no ingenuity can make really intelligible. The meaning "congregation" rests on no sufficient authority, nor is the reproof addressed to the people, but to the judges. Critics have therefore proposed a very slight alteration which gives the sense "O ye gods," *i.e.* O ye judges, representatives of the divine power; but it is doubtful whether such a form of address is justified by passages alleged in its support. See Hupf. and Hitzig. It seems on the whole probable that the word has been interpolated by a transcriber; there is no indication of the meaning "congregation," or "silence," in early translations. See Note below.

2. *Yea*] This word introduces the true answer—far from speaking righteousness you work wickedness.

ye weigh] A bitter sarcasm; instead of meting out justice, accurately weighing all things in the balance of justice (see Job xxxi. 6), you weigh out and distribute your own violence.

3. *from the womb*] Sinners from infancy onwards. The Psalmist however does not here declare the general doctrine of original or birth-sin: he speaks simply of the desperately wicked. Compare, however, Ps. li. 5, and Gen. vi. 5, viii. 21.

4. *poison of a serpent*] See Deut. xxxii. 33; Job xx. 14—16; Isai. xi. 8.

deaf adder] The adder appears to be specially noticed both as one of the most venomous snakes and as that which serpent-charmers find most difficulty in subduing. Cf. Eccl. x. 11. The antiquity and wide prevalence of the custom to which David alludes are well known to all readers of Eastern travels. See Bochart, 'Hieroz.' II. iii. 6; Niebuhr, 'Reiseb.' I. 189; Lane's 'Egypt.'

5. *charmers*] Literally, "whisperers." A word used specially to describe the inarticulate murmurs of enchanters.

charming] Or, **of one that bindeth charms skilfully.** The phrase "bindeth charms" is generally understood to refer to some process of conjuring, probably by tying knots, a symbol of the restraining force of the incantation. The word rendered "skilfully" means thoroughly experienced, an adept in charming. The Egyptians called an expert magician *rech chetu*, sc. one who knows things.

6. *Break their teeth*] The power of wrong-doing must be put down: if the poison cannot be drawn out, the fangs must be broken. In the next clause the Psalmist reverts to his favourite image, and describes the cruel judge as the lion in his full vigour, whose great jaw-teeth must be broken. Cf. Job iv. 10.

7. The figures again change; let them melt away like waters poured out, and running to waste. The same word for dissolution is used Job vii. 5.

when he bendeth] The italics in our version shew that the original is obscure = literally "he treadeth (*i.e.* as our version explains, bendeth his bow to shoot) his arrows, so (*i.e.* just at that moment, ere he can adjust the bow) let them be broken; let them and their instruments of evil perish together." It is possible however that the subject of "shooteth" is God. "He shooteth his arrows, so are they cut off."

8. *untimely birth*] Or, "abortion;" compare Job iii. 16; Eccles. vi. 3—5.

9. The meaning of this obscure and difficult verse appears to be, **Before your pots feel the thorn** (*i.e.* before the fire of the thorns makes itself felt), **so, be it** (the thorn) **quick or be it dry, the whirlwind will sweep it away.** The wicked are compared to a heap of thorns, some green, some dried up, lighted under a caldron, and then swept away by a sudden storm. The words rendered "living" and "in his wrath" are supposed by some to describe the flesh in the pot, either quick, or heated through: but this is contrary to the statement; the thorns are swept away before they have heated the pots: all the plans of the wicked are frustrated by

10 The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.

11 So that a man shall say, Verily *there is* †a reward for the righteous: † Heb. *fruit of the*, &c.
verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.

their sudden and complete destruction. The comparison of wicked men to thorns, easily set on fire, and scattered by a blast of wind, is familiar to David: cf. 2 S. xxiii. 6, 7: "The sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns—they shall be utterly burnt with fire." See also Ps. cxviii. 12. Cf. Note below.

10. *wash his feet*] A lesson not of vengeance but of warning. David has had no part in the destruction; that has been the work of Him to Whom vengeance belongeth. It must be remembered that David shed no blood of his subjects, even when rebellious, without the most absolute necessity, and that his own fault had been rather that of remissness and over-indulgence.

11. *a God that judgeth*] This is one of the very few passages in which the Hebrew Elohim is construed with a plural predicate. Hence instead of "God" it may be better to render the word "Deity" or Godhead, "truly the Godhead judgeth the earth." Kay understands it to refer to "manifold divine agencies."

NOTES on PSALM LVIII. 1, 8, 9.

1. The LXX., Vulg. and Syriac, seem to have had a particle = ἄρα, utique. The Arab. "truly." Hitzig proposes here and in Ps. lvi. 1 to read לְאֹם=אֵלֶם, "people:" a suggestion not likely to be adopted. I should rather conjecture בְּנֵי אֵלִים, "sons of the mighty." Dr Kay gives an ingenious rendering, well adapted to the circumstances of David, supposing that the psalm was composed at the same date as the preceding—"Will ye indeed utter long silent judgment?" referring to 2 S. xv. 2—6. The words of Absalom are much to the point, "See, thy matters are good and right, *and yet none is deputed from the king to hear thee.*" But the expression "silence of justice" scarcely bears out the interpretation.

8. The first clause may be rendered, "as a snail which one crushes, and it perishes," or "as a snail goes melting away." The former is preferable as giving a true and forcible image (thus Delitzsch, who takes תָּמֵס to be the fut. apoc. Hiph. from מָסַס=מָסָה), but the construction is uncertain.

9. Dr Kay suggests a rendering of the text which is ingenious and striking. He observes that "*Charon*" is always used of *divine wrath*, and translates "Before your caldrons have felt the thorn-fire, even as raw flesh, even so shall hot fury sweep them away." The figure is that of a whirlwind sweeping away the banqueters' food. It seems however more suitable to the context to take the thorns with which the enemies of David are heating their caldron, in other words, preparing their machinations, as the point of comparison. Accepting *Charon* in the sense of "fiery wrath" we might render "Before your caldrons feel (*the fire of*) the thorns, even as quick, even so shall hot fury sweep them away;" but "quick' refers to the thorns. Like the thorn-bush, אָטָד, yet quick, half-lighted, the conspirators will be swept away by a blast of God's wrath. The second כְּמוֹ is omitted in one MS., see Kennicott, but probably by oversight.

PSALM LIX.

1 *David prayeth to be delivered from his enemies.* 6 *He complaineth of their cruelty.* 8 *He trusteth in God.* 11 *He prayeth against them.* 16 *He praiseth God.*

To the chief Musician, ‖Al-taschith, Michtam of David; [a]when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him.

‖ Or, *Destroy not, A golden* Psalm *of David.*
[a] 1 Sam. 19. 11.

DELIVER me from mine enemies, O my God: †defend me from them that rise up against me. † Heb. *set me on high.*

2 Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, and save me from bloody men.

3 For, lo, they lie in wait for my

PSALM LIX.

The inscription states the circumstances under which this psalm was composed, and it is borne out by the contents. David writes in imminent danger; troops of his enemies lie in wait to seize him, or prowl about the city uttering threats against him. He protests his innocence, prays for the overthrow of his foes, and expresses entire confidence in the mercy and protection of God. These points agree with the account in 1 S. xix., when Saul sent messengers to take away David's life, which was only preserved by the affection of his wife. This psalm is therefore, in all probability,

soul: the mighty are gathered against me; not *for* my transgression, nor *for* my sin, O LORD.

4 They run and prepare themselves without *my* fault: awake [t] to help me, and behold.

5 Thou therefore, O LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel, awake to visit all the heathen: be not merciful to any wicked transgressors. Selah.

6 They return at evening: they make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.

7 Behold, they belch out with their mouth: swords *are* in their lips: for [b] who, *say they*, doth hear?

8 But thou, O LORD, shalt laugh at them; thou shalt have all the heathen in derision.

9 *Because of* his strength will I

[t] Heb. *to meet me.*

[b] Ps. 10. 11. & 73. 11. & 94. 7.

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one of the very oldest writings of David which has been preserved to us. It bears all the distinctive characteristics of his early style, vehement, abrupt, graphic in its descriptions, and full of the feelings which were the mainspring of his spiritual life. It is objected that the mention of the heathen (5, 8), and the description of the enemies, applicable rather to brigands than to the king's guards, militate against this view, and various occasions have been suggested as more suitable to the feelings and thoughts; but the objections have little weight (see notes on 5, 6), and the conjectures of each commentator are, as usual, summarily rejected by others of equal learning.

The structure is highly artistic, and resembles that of other early psalms of David. The refrain at *v.* 10 and *v.* 17 divides it into two parts, subdivided severally at *v.* 5 and *v.* 13 by Selah.

Al-taschith] **Destroy not**, cf. *v.* 11, "slay them not," Kay. But the tone of feeling is different, and the reference therefore seems questionable.

1. *defend me*] Or, as marg., **set me on high**; sc. on a high place; see Ps. xx. 1, marg.

3. The "lying in wait," and the word "mighty" or strong ones (cf. Pss. x. 10, xxxviii. 19), are especially suitable to the emissaries of Saul, who watched David's house to slay him in the morning. The protestations of absolute innocence are found more frequently in psalms belonging to that period of David's life (cf. 1 S. xxiv. 11; Ps. vii. 3): they are also far more fitting in the case of a subject unjustly persecuted, than of one beset by foreign enemies, who would not be concerned with the question of his personal integrity.

4. *run and prepare themselves*] Both words denote the prompt and officious servility of hirelings.

awake to help me] A bold, but not uncommon address to God, see Ps. xliv. 23, one also that would specially suggest itself to David beset by assassins in the deep loneliness of night.

5. *O LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel*] For the use of these names see note on 1 S. i. 3.

all the heathen] The Psalmist passes from a personal to a general supplication; he cannot think of his own danger and deliverance without reverting to the condition of his country. It has been observed (see note on Ps. liv. 3) that Saul appears to have employed aliens, especially when persecuting one who, as he well knew, was loved by all true Hebrews. These considerations meet the inference of a later date drawn from the mention of heathens.

wicked transgressors] The Hebrew words denote treachery and faithlessness; men who do evil regardless of all religious or moral considerations. David thus describes two classes of persecutors, such as Saul would naturally select, men who as aliens would be wholly without sympathy, and others who had treacherously deserted their comrade in the hour of trial. The strong emotion which this thought suggests is marked by the word Selah.

6. *They return at evening*] The meaning appears to be that after an unsuccessful search of the house on the first morning (1 S. xix. 11), Saul's emissaries return in the evening, prowl about the gates, snarling and growling like hounds at fault, and go to and fro in the city, probably in order to occupy every egress, and cut off David's flight.

7. *Behold*, &c.] **Lo! they pour out** *words* **with their mouth.** The word properly denotes the seething of a caldron, the gushing of a spring of water, or the heaving of a fermenting mass. It is rendered "utter," Ps. xciv. 4; "poureth out," Prov. xv. 2, 28.

swords are in their lips] See Ps. lvii. 4.

for who, say they, doth hear?] Our version probably gives a true explanation by inserting "say they" in italics: cf. Ps. x. 11; Job xx. 12: but the words may represent the Psalmist's feelings and convey an expostulation; his enemies utter their threats without fear that they will be heard and punished by the righteous Judge.

8. *shalt laugh at them*] This phrase (a very common one in Hebrew poetry, see note on Ps. ii. 4) has a peculiar fitness if referred to the stratagem by which Saul's

wait upon thee: for God *is* †my defence.

10 The God of my mercy shall prevent me: God shall let me see *my* *desire* upon †mine enemies.

11 Slay them not, lest my people forget: scatter them by thy power; and bring them down, O Lord our shield.

12 *For* the sin of their mouth *and* the words of their lips let them even be taken in their pride: and for cursing and lying *which* they speak.

13 Consume *them* in wrath, consume *them*, that they *may* not *be:* and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth. Selah.

14 And at evening let them return; *and* let them make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.

15 Let them wander up and down †for meat, ‖and grudge if they be not satisfied.

16 But I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy

† Heb. *my high place.*

† Heb. *mine observers.*

† Heb. *to eat.*

‖ Or, *if they be not satisfied, then they will stay all night.*

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emissaries were baffled and mocked, see 1 S. xix. 16: but it expresses generally the truth that the machinations of God's enemies are not less absurd than wicked; and one who judges them aright is struck not less forcibly by their utter folly than by their malignity. There is a hideous grotesqueness in detected villainy.

all the heathen] See note on *v.* 5.

9. *his strength*] The construction is difficult if "his" refers to the enemies described in the preceding verses, but David probably has in mind the "strength" of Saul his real enemy. This of course does not suit the views of those who reject the inscription, and find no other natural explanation of the sudden change of persons. See Note below.

defence] Or, "fortress," Ps. xviii. 2, where A. V. has "high tower."

10. The second part of the psalm begins here. It is even more obscure than the first; Delitzsch observes that the exposition is here so difficult in every detail that it is like deciphering an inscription; yet if the special circumstances are borne in mind, each word has a point.

11. *Slay them not*] This prayer is suitable to the circumstances of the inscription, but very unsuitable to any other which has been suggested. A prayer that God should not at once destroy the emissaries of the king, but frustrate their plans, scatter them, reduce them to want, as liars, blasphemers, and assassins, make them examples of punishment, and ultimately root them out of Israel, is neither unnatural nor unprovoked; but it would have no meaning if directed against foreign enemies, whom the Psalmist would wish to be destroyed at once, and against whom he would have no such personal feelings as those expressed in these imprecations. The application to the dispersion and miseries of the Hebrews for the murder of their Saviour is obvious, and stands or falls with the general principle of typical exposition. If David was, as the Church has ever believed, a type of Christ, and moved specially by the Spirit, then such utterances must have, not indeed a double meaning, but a double application.

12. *For the sin*, &c.] Lit. "the words of their lips are the sin of their mouth;" *i. e.* all their words are sheer sin, nothing but sin: thus Hupfeld; but the rendering of Ewald and Kay seems preferable, "Oh the sin of their mouth! Oh the word of their lips!"

in their pride] There may be, as most commentators hold, a reference to the words "who doth hear?" in *v.* 7: but David's psalms about this time are full of complaints of the pride and insolence of his enemies, the favourites of Saul.

13. *Consume them*] Or, **Make an end in wrath, make an end!** After undergoing such punishments as may warn the people, let them perish, that all may learn the truth which they have denied.

unto the ends of the earth] Wherever they may wander when scattered. Their punishment thus becomes directly subservient to the cause of truth; a prophetic utterance which, if not developed in the Psalmist's consciousness, has been illustrated by the dispersion of his countrymen.

14. *let them return*] Or, **they return**, &c. The Psalmist repeats *v.* 6; not, as in our version, expressing a wish, but describing a fact. He sees the troop return, hears their threats, and sees them prowling about like bloodhounds.

15. *Let them*] Or, **They prowl about to devour; if they are not satisfied, then will they pass the night**; the same imagery, but with one word, "pass the night," which fixes the sense. The guards took up their station at the door of David's house. 1 S. xix. 11.

16. *But I*] Or, **But as for me, I will sing**, &c. The "I" is emphatic, and contrasted with "they" in the preceding verse.

in the morning: for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble.

17 Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing: for God *is* my defence, *and* the God of my mercy.

in the morning] The whole description implies a nightly attack. David has no doubt that when morning comes it will find him safe and grateful. It is hard to account for the rejection of so natural and obvious an interpretation.

NOTE on PSALM LIX. 9.

The old Versions had another reading; LXX. and Vulg. "my strength;" Syr. "my God." Thus Hitzig, "mein Schutz." He rejects the Hebrew with his usual confidence. Perowne follows him. The extreme facility of the correction is no recommendation.

PSALM LX.

1 *David, complaining to God of former judgment, 4 now, upon better hope, prayeth for deliverance. 6 Comforting himself in God's promises, he craveth that help whereon he trusteth.*

To the chief Musician upon Shushan-eduth, ‖ Michtam of David, to teach; [a] when he strove with Aram-naharaim and with Aram-zobah, when Joab returned, and smote of Edom in the valley of salt twelve thousand.

‖ Or, *A golden* Psalm.
[a] 2 Sam. 8. 3, 13. 1 Chron. 18. 3.

O GOD, [b] thou hast cast us off, thou hast [†] scattered us, thou hast been displeased; O turn thyself to us again.

[b] Ps. 44. 9.
[†] Heb. *broken.*

2 Thou hast made the earth to tremble; thou hast broken it: heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh.

3 Thou hast shewed thy people

PSALM LX.

According to the inscription this psalm belongs to the time when David was engaged in the great war with the Syrians and Ammonites, which lasted a considerable time, and ended with a complete victory, and great extension of the kingdom. It implies, however, that very serious and alarming reverses had taken place, of which no record is preserved in the brief accounts of 2 S. viii. and 1 Chro. xviii. 12. The Edomites had probably taken advantage of the absence of the king with his army, perhaps also of some check, of which rumours had reached them, and ravaged the southern district. The psalm expresses great affliction at the reverses, with a certain anticipation of victory. It could not have been composed in a later reign; the terms, in which Ephraim and the trans-Jordanic territories of the kingdom are named, are incompatible with any period after the separation of the ten tribes, still more so with any period after the captivity. The psalm is essentially Davidic in style, feeling, and historical allusions.

There are three strophes, the complaint with its bright hope, 1—4; the triumph, 5—8; the prayer and confident anticipation, 9—12.

Inscription. *Shushan-eduth*] Literally, "the lily of testimony." See note on xlv.

Aram-naharaim] Syria of the two rivers, *i. e.* Mesopotamia; this region is not mentioned in 2 S. viii., but it was either subject to the king of Zobah, or in close alliance with him. This and other points prove the complete independence of the inscription, which cannot have been taken from our books, nor from the psalm itself, which omits all mention of Aram. The situation of Zobah is uncertain; it probably extended over the greater part of the region between the Euphrates and Orontes.

when Joab returned] The psalm appears to have been written just when David was setting out on the expedition. Joab's victory over the Edomites is not mentioned in the historical books, where we read only of a defeat of the Syrians in the Valley of Salt. It is probable that instead of *Aram*, Syria, the reading in Sam. l.c. should be Edom. We have, however, no data which can enable us to reconcile accounts which may refer to different events, or to circumstances unnoticed by the historian.

the valley of salt] The barren district about 8 miles broad to the south of the Dead Sea.

1. *cast us off*] See Ps. xliv. 9. The expression denotes at the least a severe check, if not defeat, of the main army.

scattered us] Or, **broken us**; the word does not necessarily denote a complete rout of the army, but a break of the line; the army may have been broken into two or more divisions. See however 2 S. v. 20; Judg. xxi. 15.

hast been displeased] The statement implies a consciousness of some great fault in the people or the king.

2. *the earth*] Or, "the land." David is speaking of his country, broken and con-

hard things: thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment.

4 Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah.

[c] Ps. 108. 6, &c.

5 [c]That thy beloved may be delivered; save *with* thy right hand, and hear me.

6 God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.

7 Gilead *is* mine, and Manasseh *is* mine; Ephraim also *is* the strength of mine head; Judah *is* my lawgiver;

8 Moab *is* my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe: Philistia, [l]triumph thou because of me.

[l] Or, *triumph thou over me* (by an irony).

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vulsed as by an earthquake. The prayer, however, is full of hope.

it shaketh] This word is specially used of convulsions of an earthquake, and it occurs frequently in Davidic psalms.

3. *hard things*] Lit. "a hard thing," "severity."

wine of astonishment] A common and terrible figure in the prophetical books. See Isai. li. 17, 22, where A. V. has "trembling;" Jer. xxv. 15.

4. The strain changes: the rout had not been complete (see note on *v.* 1): the army, though broken, could be rallied, and the Psalmist points to the banner yet waving in the name of the God of Hosts (Jehovah Nissi, see Ex. xvii. 15); around which all true-hearted Israelites would rally, and contend again for the true and righteous cause. Cf. Isai. v. 26, xi. 12, xiii. 2.

that it may be displayed because of the truth] This rendering of a difficult and contested phrase is accepted by some critics, but the meaning may be that they may rally around it out of reach of the archers. See Note below.

5. *That thy beloved*] Or, That thy beloved ones, the fearers of the Lord, as they are called in the preceding verse. Thus the first part of the psalm closes, as usual, with a full strain of hope. No warrior ever understood his people better than David, whose impressionable heart felt the shock of all their emotions, but never failed to settle on the rock.

6. *God hath spoken*] This introduces another subject. David had doubtless consulted his God after the reverse, and now gives either the substance and purport, or the very words of the answer, however it may have been communicated. It consists of two parts, first, an assurance of unshaken possession of the whole Israelitish territory, secondly, of dominion over the neighbouring kingdoms, now in a state of revolt and hostility. This entire passage is repeated in Ps. cviii. 6—13.

in his holiness] Or, as in Ps. lxxxix. 35, "by His holiness;" cf. Amos iv. 2. The word may however be rendered (as by the LXX., Vulg.) "in His sanctuary," sc. from the mercy-seat, whence the oracle went forth.

I will rejoice] The rejoicing of God implies the withdrawal of His anger: punishment is "His strange work:" His joy is in the welfare of His people. The words, however, pass by a rapid transition to David: they express his feelings under the influence of the divine oracle.

I will divide] Or, "portion out," *i. e.* rule as king and judge with uncontested authority. Shechem and Succoth represent the central region of Israel: they, as the king now feels, are unendangered. The valley of Succoth is probably a district on the east of the Jordan; but there is difficulty in identifying the site.

7. *Gilead*] On the east of the Jordan. This promise secures David in the possession of the whole trans-Jordanic region: Manasseh and Ephraim complete the promise, which could not be claimed by any of his descendants after Solomon.

Judah is my lawgiver] The reference to Gen. xlix. 10 is unquestionable. (See also Num. xxi. 18.) It leaves no doubt as to the date. In David's reign, and in that of his son, and *then only*, could it be said that the sceptre pertained to Judah, but that Ephraim was the strength of his head.

8. *Moab is my washpot*] A sarcasm which has peculiar point applied to a nation remarkable for arrogance (cf. Isai. xvi. 6), and just then reduced to utter subjugation. The same figure is found in Herodotus, II. 172. David was connected with Moab by his descent from Ruth, and in early life had been on terms of confidential friendship with its king (see 1 S. xxii. 3, 4); but owing to some unrecorded transaction, possibly connected with treatment of his parents, his feelings were changed to extreme bitterness. See 2 S. viii. 2.

cast out my shoe] There is an evident connection between this metaphor and that in the preceding clause. The king regards Moab as a vessel fit only for the meanest uses—he casts the shoe, which he takes off in order to wash his feet, to Edom as a mere slave, cf. 2 S. viii. 14. There is no sufficient authority for the conjecture, though in itself not improbable, that casting a shoe may have been a symbolical form of taking possession of a disputed district.

triumph thou because of me] Or, "unto me, O Philistia, shout loudly." This appears

† Heb. *city of strength?*

9 Who will bring me *into* the †strong city? who will lead me into Edom?

10 *Wilt* not thou, O God, *which* [d] hadst cast us off? and *thou*, O God, *which* didst not go out with our armies?

[d] Ps. 44. 9. & 108. 11.

11 Give us help from trouble: for vain *is* the †help of man.

† Heb. *salvation.*

12 Through God we shall do valiantly: for he *it is that* shall tread down our enemies.

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to be a call to Philistia to join the king's army. It must come with loud demonstrations of loyalty, whether dictated by admiration or extorted by fear. The former supposition is probable: the Cherethites and Pelethites, David's body-guard, are supposed to have consisted in part of men of Philistine descent: see also the account of the Gittites and their captain Ittai, in 2 S. xv. 18. See, however, critical Note. The true rendering may be in accordance with Ps. cviii. 9, "over Philistia is my triumphing."

9. *Who will bring me*] The common Hebrew idiom to express an earnest longing or confident hope; equivalent to "O that He would lead me," &c. Classical writers use the same form, *e. g.* "Quis me gelidis in montibus Hæmi sistat?"

strong city] Or, "fortified city," whether Petra (cf. 2 K. xiv. 7), as Delitzsch and Hengstenberg suppose, or Rabbath Ammon, which shortly after this time was captured by David, is uncertain: the mention of Edom agrees better with the former view.

who will lead me] Lit. "who hath led me," a change of tense which presents some difficulty, but the true meaning is probably expressed in the text.

10. *Wilt not thou, O God*] A loving expostulation; the anger, he doubts not, is past. God, who had apparently withdrawn His presence, will now grant all the desire of His servant.

12. *do valiantly*] Cf. Num. xxiv. 18; Ps. cxviii. 15, 16.

tread down] Ps. xliv. 5; Isai. lxiii. 3.

NOTES on PSALM LX. 4, 8.

4. The difficulty is in the last words; the preceding words are clear, "The Lord sets up a standard for those who fear Him;" but the meaning of להתנוסס and מפני קשט is questioned. The former may be rendered, "that it may be raised," or displayed, as in A. V.; or, more probably, "that they may flee to it, and be gathered around it;" the latter means either "because of truth" [as A. V. following the Targum; Aq. *ἀπὸ προσώπου βεβαιότητος*: thus, too, Dr Kay, Delitzsch, and the Bishop of Lincoln, who claims (evidently by oversight) the old Vv.]. On the other hand LXX., Vulg., Jerome, Arab., Æthiop., Copt., Syr., Sym. render "from the bow;" a good sense, "out of reach of the archers." Thus Ges., Hupf., Hitz. (2nd ed.). If this be accepted קשט=קשת, either as a lapsus calami, or as a dialectic variety, following the Syriac and Chaldee; thus Ges. and Hitzig.

8. Instead of התרועעי the text of Ps. cviii. 9 has אתרועעה, *i.e.* I will triumph over Philistia. The meaning is thus much simpler, if not more appropriate, but the change seems to have been made to clear up a difficulty. The text in this psalm may, however, be retained with the same meaning if התרועעי be taken as the infinitive with suffix, "my triumphing is over Philistia." Thus Hupfeld. The LXX., Aq., Theod. derived the verb from רעה, *ὑπετάγησαν, ἡταιρήσατο, ἐφιλίασαν.*

PSALM LXI.

1 *David fleeth to God upon his former experience.* 4 *He voweth perpetual service unto him, because of his promises.*

To the chief Musician upon Neginah, *A Psalm* of David.

HEAR my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer.

2 From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock *that* is higher than I.

PSALM LXI.

This appears to have been composed when David was driven from Jerusalem by Absalom. The notice of the tabernacle in *v.* 4, and the prayer for the king in *v.* 6, are incompatible with the period of his persecution by Saul.

upon Neginah] See inscription on Ps. iv. The meaning is doubtful, probably a tune adapted to a stringed instrument. In Job xxx. 9, A.V. has "song."

2. *From the end of the earth*] *i.e.* the

3 For thou hast been a shelter for me, *and* a strong tower from the enemy.

4 I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will ‖trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah.

‖ Or, *make my refuge.*

5 For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: thou hast given *me* the heritage of those that fear thy name.

6 †Thou wilt prolong the king's life: *and* his years †as many generations.

† Heb. *Thou shalt add days to the days of the king.*

7 He shall abide before God for ever: O prepare mercy and truth, *which* may preserve him.

† Heb. *as generation and generation.*

8 So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows.

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uttermost limits of the land beyond the Jordan: such an expression is natural to the king at a distance from the sanctuary and capital of Palestine.

is overwhelmed] Or, **fainteth.** In Isai. lvii. 16, A. V. has "fail." See Ps. lxxvii. 3. Pr. B. "is in heaviness," a good rendering.

lead me] Or, "Thou wilt lead me," an expression of perfect trust grounded upon past mercies described in the following verse.

the rock that is higher than I] *i. e.* a place of perfect security, which is too high for me to climb unaided. David has doubtless in mind the mount of Zion which he had once taken by assault, but which is now occupied by his foes.

4. *thy tabernacle*] The heavenly home represented by the earthly tabernacle from which the king was banished; cf. Ps. xv. 1. This proves that the psalm was not written in a later reign, when the word "temple" not "tabernacle" would have been used.

for ever] Lit. "ages," equivalent to "eternity." The prayer involves a sure faith in a future state of blessedness.

I will trust in the covert] Or, **Let me find shelter in the covert of Thy wings.** The Psalmist refers to the outspread wings of the cherubim on the Mercy-seat. The tabernacle was a figure of the heavenly sanctuary, the cherubim represented the protecting love of the heavenly King, and were the recognized symbols of His presence.

5. *the heritage*] Not merely the temporal heritage, of which David for a season was deprived, but the everlasting heritage described in the preceding verse.

6. *Thou wilt prolong*] Literally, Thou wilt add days to the days of the King, *i.e.* not merely prolong His life, but add to His natural life another life, even an eternal one. That David speaks of the Messiah, the ideal King of Whom he felt himself to be a type and representation, seems quite clear. The Targum, in accordance with all early Hebrew tradition, refers it to King Messiah: and in fact the words in this and the following verse are too express and definite to be accounted for by the usual assumption of hyperbole or poetic exaggeration.

as many generations] Or, **as generation and generation**, an expression always tantamount to an indefinite if not infinite duration.

7. *He shall abide*] Literally, "He shall sit," *i.e.* on His throne. The words are too clear to be explained away. The King to whom the Psalmist refers will have an everlasting dominion.

prepare] Or, "appoint that mercy and truth may preserve Him." See Note below.

8. *for ever*] One more proof of David's belief, not merely in the continuance, but eternity, of personal consciousness.

NOTE on PSALM LXI. 7.

The LXX., Vulg., Syr. and Arab. render מִן "Who?" But there is no authority for this usage in Hebrew; see note on Exod. xvi. 15. The Targum has מן מרי עלמא, "from the Lord of the world;" which may perhaps indicate a various reading. The rendering of the A. V. is generally adopted by modern critics, who take מִן to be an apoc. imper. of מָנָה, *i.e.* grant or appoint.

PSALM LXII.

1 *David professing his confidence in God discourageth his enemies.* 5 *In the same confidence he encourageth the godly.* 9 *No trust is to be put in worldly things.* 11 *Power and mercy belong to God.*

To the chief Musician, to Jeduthun, A Psalm of David.

1 TRULY my soul †waiteth upon God: from him *cometh* my salvation.

‖ Or, *Only.* † Heb. *is silent.*

2 He only *is* my rock and my salvation; *he is* my †defence; I shall not be greatly moved.

† Heb. *high place.*

3 How long will ye imagine mis-

chief against a man? ye shall be slain all of you: as a bowing wall *shall ye be, and as* a tottering fence.

4 They only consult to cast *him* down from his excellency: they delight in lies: they bless with their mouth, but they curse † inwardly. Selah.

† Heb. *in their inward parts.*

5 My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation *is* from him.

6 He only *is* my rock and my salvation: *he is* my defence; I shall not be moved.

7 In God *is* my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, *and* my refuge, *is* in God.

8 Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God *is* a refuge for us. Selah.

9 Surely men of low degree *are* vanity, *and* men of high degree *are* a lie: to be laid in the balance, they *are* ‖ altogether *lighter* than vanity.

‖ Or, *alike.*

PSALM LXII.

This bears a close resemblance in style and structure to the 39th, and was undoubtedly written by the same author. The earnestness of thought, the depth and force of religious feeling, no less than the vigour and sublimity of the language, leave no room for doubting the correctness of the inscription, which attributes it to David. The date of the composition is uncertain. It is more cheerful and hopeful than the psalms written about the time of Absalom's revolt, though some expressions may seem to refer to the outburst of an insurrection.

Jeduthun] See Ps. xxxix.

1. *Truly*] Or, "only." The Hebrew word is difficult to translate; it occurs six times in this psalm as an affirmative particle adding force to the assertion and excluding all contradiction. It may be expressed by the words "surely," "verily," or "only," but it is better, when possible, to keep one word, bearing in mind that it does not adequately convey the force of the original. In Ps. xxxix. the word occurs four times.

waiteth] Or, "my soul is silently waiting unto God," *i.e.* turned towards Him in speechless expectation, with unutterable yearning; see Ps. xxxiii. 20.

2. *greatly moved*] Ps. x. 6, where see note.

3. *imagine mischief*] The Hebrew word, which occurs in no other passage, is obscure, but it probably means "assault," "rush with violence." (Targ. and Syr. tumultuamini, or fremitis, LXX. ἐπιτίθεσθε, Vulg. irruitis, Jerome, insidiamini.) The etymology is quite uncertain. It seems to imply the outburst of an insurrection.

ye shall be slain all of you] There is some difficulty in this passage. Our version follows a traditional reading which is probably incorrect. The meaning of the original appears to be, "*How long* will ye all of you *unite to* crush a man like a bowing wall, a tottering hedge?" As though David were in such state that a violent blow would cause his destruction. The imprecation (though supported by many similar passages and justified by the king's position as the representative of God's justice) is out of place in this part of the psalm, which, moreover, throughout is singularly noble and calm in its utterances. Our version follows the Hebrew tradition of the west, adopted by the Targ. and by some of the ancient interpreters. That which is given in this note is supported by another school of Rabbis, by nearly all ancient versions (LXX. φονεύετε, Vulg., Jer.), and by the generality of modern critics.

4. *from his excellency*] The word denotes high rank, supreme dignity, and is more appropriate to a king, than to a persecuted prophet. Cf. Job xiii. 11.

with their mouth] Lit. "They bless with his mouth." The Psalmist, as in numerous instances, individualizes his opponents, selecting one as the ringleader. The expression points to the arch-traitor, Ahithophel. Cf. Ps. v. 6, 9.

5. *wait*] Or, **be silent**, as above. The Psalmist exhorts his soul to retain the feeling of absolute resignation, which he had expressed in the opening verse.

6. *be moved*] Cf. Ps. xviii. 1, and note the increase of David's confidence; in *v.* 2 he says, "I shall not be *greatly* moved."

7. *In God*] Or, **On God** *rests* **my salvation and my glory.**

8. *ye people*] It is observable that the king does not say "my people:" but this can scarcely be accounted for by their revolt, as Delitzsch supposes. The people whom he addresses are his own adherents (cf. Judg. iii. 18; 1 K. xix. 21), who need exhortation and comfort, and are in a fit state to pour out their hearts in prayer.

9. *men of low degree*] As in Ps. xlix. 2, the Psalmist uses two words for "man," the first equivalent to (homo) a common man, the other to (vir, ἀνήρ) a man distinguished by personal or adventitious advantages.

a lie] These counterfeits, assuming a power which is not theirs. David looks calmly at all

10 Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart *upon them.*

11 God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that [f] power *belongeth* unto God.

12 Also unto thee, O Lord, *belongeth* mercy: for [a] thou renderest to every man according to his work.

[f] Or, *strength.*
[a] Job 34. 11. Prov. 24. 12. Jer. 32. 19. Ezek. 7. 27. Matth. 16. 27. Rom. 2. 6. 2 Cor. 5. 10. Eph. 6. 8. Col. 3. 25. 1 Pet. 1. 17. Rev. 22. 12.

PSALM LXIII.

1 *David's thirst for God.* 4 *His manner of blessing God.* 9 *His confidence of his enemies' destruction, and his own safety.*

A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.

O GOD, thou *art* my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and [t] thirsty land, [t] where no water is;

[t] Heb. *weary.*
[t] Heb. *without water.*

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his enemies, the mass as a mere mob, their leaders but empty boasters.

to be laid in the balance] Or, **in the scales they go up, they are altogether** *lighter* **than mere breath.** Thus Hupf., Ew., Hitz. Dr Kay renders "they belong altogether to vanity."

10. *in oppression*] This points at the tyranny of the nobles, among whom Absalom may have found his chief supporters. See Ps. lviii. 2.

become not vain in robbery] *i.e.* trust not vainly in rapine. A trait of the times: in this and many similar passages, as Prov. i. 10—14 (where see note), we have traces of a wanton insolent spirit of brigandage among the nobles, like that of the Norman barons, and of the French noblesse in the 16th century. The word "vanity" refers to the preceding verse, where the same word is used in the Hebrew. It denotes in both cases empty inflation. "A breath may make them as a breath has made."

11. *God hath spoken once*] Compare Job xxxiii. 14, and xl. 5. The Psalmist speaks of an inward revelation to his conscience. God speaks by the manifestation of Himself; man listens, and hears the two great lessons of divine power, and divine justice, shewn in mercy and perfect retribution.

12. *mercy*] Or, "grace." The reward, though exactly proportioned to man's deserts, is a free gift, and comes from God's grace. The desert implies fitness, but does not constitute a claim upon Him, from Whom comes both the will and power to act.

Psalm LXIII.

The indications of time, place and circumstances in this psalm are distinct; it was written when the Psalmist was followed by enemies seeking after his life (9), in a dry and thirsty land without water (1), after a night passed in devout meditation (6); it expresses feelings of intense longing after God, not less intense than when the Psalmist had previously worshipped in the sanctuary (2), feelings moreover of unshaken hope filling the soul with joy (5), leading to an assured conviction of the overthrow and ruin of his enemies, and their chief (9, 10), and of the complete deliverance of the king (11), evidently the composer of this psalm, unsurpassed for devout and earnest sentiment. The style is somewhat obscure in passages, but singularly animated and graphic. All these points are in accordance with the inscription, which attributes the psalm to David; supposing it to have been composed on the morning after the flight from Jerusalem, when "the king, and all that were with him, came weary" and took up their first night-quarters; 2 S. xvi. 14.

This psalm was sung at daily matins in the earliest ages of the Church; see 'Const. Apost.' II. c. 59, ed. Coteler.; thus, too, Athanasius and other Fathers.

the wilderness] The wilderness of Judah in this passage is understood to include the country, for the most part barren and dry, between Jerusalem and Jericho (thus Dathe, Rosen., Hengst., Delitzsch, &c.): David passed two days in it in a state of great weariness and exhaustion; a fact well appreciated by Ahithophel, who said "I will come upon him while he is weary and weakhanded," 2 S. xvii. 2, and by those who received the king after crossing the Jordan, "for they said, The people is hungry, and weary, and thirsty, in the wilderness." 2 S. xvii. 29.

1. *thou art my God*] David uses the name El, which expresses the might of God, in which in all his weakness (see above) he retains unbroken trust.

early will I seek thee] The expression is used idiomatically in many passages to denote earnest seeking, see note on Job vii. 21; here it probably is taken literally, denoting the prayer offered at the first burst of dawn, when the king awoke "refreshed;" cf. *vv.* 5—7; 2 S. xvi. 14.

my soul thirsteth for thee] See Ps. xlii. 2. The expression is metaphorical, but, as in that beautiful psalm, in harmony with the special circumstances.

longeth] The Hebrew word occurs in no other passage; it seems to denote exhaustion and longing. In Arabic, the only cognate dialect in which the root is found, it has the meaning of "blindness."

thirsty land] Lit. as in the marg. "weary," an epithet peculiarly applicable to the desert, see Isai. xxxii. 2. The word, as has been pointed out above, is used twice to describe

2 To see thy power and thy glory,
so *as* I have seen thee in the sanctuary.
3 Because thy lovingkindness *is*
better than life, my lips shall praise
thee.
4 Thus will I bless thee while I
live: I will lift up my hands in thy
name.
5 My soul shall be satisfied as
with † marrow and fatness; and my
mouth shall praise *thee* with joyful
lips:

† Heb. *fatness.*

6 When I remember thee upon my
bed, *and* meditate on thee in the *night*
watches.
7 Because thou hast been my help,
therefore in the shadow of thy wings
will I rejoice.
8 My soul followeth hard after
thee: thy right hand upholdeth me.
9 But those *that* seek my soul, to
destroy *it*, shall go into the lower
parts of the earth.
10 † They shall fall by the sword:
they shall be a portion for foxes.

† Heb. *They shall make him run out* like water *by the hands of the sword.*

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the sufferings of David and his people in the first two days of his flight. The Psalmist undoubtedly suggests a comparison between the thirsty land and his own longing heart, but the imagery is strictly local. The expression is repeated in Ps. cxliii. 6.

2. *To see ... the sanctuary*] The A.V. transposes the two clauses, thus obscuring the connection of thought. The Hebrew has **Thus have I contemplated Thee in the sanctuary, to behold Thy strength and Thy glory.** The meaning appears to be, The devout feelings which now possess me are the same as those with which I was animated when I worshipped in the sanctuary, and realized the strength and glory symbolized by the Ark of the Covenant. It will be remembered that David had sent back the Ark into the city, saying, "If I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord He will bring me again, and shew me both it, and His habitation." 2 S. xv. 25. That thought naturally presented itself to his mind when he awoke, and compared his former and present state of feeling. The two words "strength" and "glory," as Dr Kay observes, are associated with the Ark of the Covenant, *e.g.* in 1 S. iv. 21; Ps. lxxviii. 61.

3. *is better than life*] David's life was in great peril, but the loving favour was secure; such a feeling is inseparable from a faith in a future state; see Ps. xvi. 8—10.

4. *Thus will I bless thee*] The same word with which the second verse properly begins, "thus," *i.e.* as I adored Thee in the sanctuary, and as I seek Thee now, *v.* 1, even so will I bless Thee throughout my life, which is only precious (see the preceding verse) so far as it has the lovingkindness of God shining upon it.

5. *as with marrow and fatness*] So speaks the king, "hungry and weary," in deepest suffering, yet inwardly full of joy; cf. Rom. viii. 35—37. See also Ps. xxxvi. 8.

6. *upon my bed*] David frequently speaks of night as the season for devout meditation, see Ps. iv. 4, and note on xvi. 7. In this passage there is evidently a direct reference to that first long night of peril and watchfulness. In the night-watches, "per singulas vigilias" (Jerome), David turned to God in prayer, and received the support of which he speaks in the next verse.

7. *Because thou hast been*] A reference both to past deliverances, and to the inward assurance granted in answer to prayer.

in the shadow of thy wings] The Ark with the Mercy-seat overshadowed by the cherubic wings was absent (see note on *v.* 2), but the power which they represented was present, full of comfort and help. Cf. Ps. xvii. 8.

8. *My soul followeth hard*, &c.] The first clause describes the cleaving of the soul to God, the second God's stedfast support of it; a reciprocal action, and reaction: prevenient grace first draws out the spiritual affection, then follows the assurance of support. Delitzsch observes truly that to understand this psalm the reader must follow it in prayer, quoting Bernard, "sermo amantis barbarus est non amanti."

9. *to destroy it*] See 2 S. xvii. 1—3. The words "to destroy it" may, however, be rendered "to their own destruction" (thus Hupfeld), a word exactly and immediately fulfilled in the case of Ahithophel, 2 S. xvii. 23.

the lower parts of the earth] *i.e.* to the grave, or to Sheol; cf. Ps. lxxxvi. 13.

10. *They shall fall by the sword*, &c.] Both clauses of this verse have a special significance; the first means "they shall shed him (*i.e.* shed his blood) like water by means of the sword." It points to an individual who is to perish by a violent death, inflicted by an instrumentality not distinctly specified: thus Ahithophel perished by his own hand, thus Absalom died pierced through the heart by three darts as he hung living in the tree, 2 S. xviii. 14. The second clause speaks of the fate of the rebels; they should be a portion for foxes, or jackals; at once a thought

11 But the king shall rejoice in God; every one that sweareth by him shall glory: but the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.

PSALM LXIV.

1 David prayeth for deliverance, complaining of his enemies. 7 He promiseth himself to see such an evident destruction of his enemies, as the righteous shall rejoice at it.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

HEAR my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy.

2 Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity:

3 [a] Who whet their tongue like a sword, *and* bend *their bows to shoot* their arrows, *even* bitter words:

4 That they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not.

5 They encourage themselves *in* an evil ‖ matter: they commune † of laying snares privily; they say, Who shall see them?

6 They search out iniquities; ‖ they accomplish † a diligent search: both the

[a] Ps. 11. 2

‖ Or, *speech.*
† Heb. *to hide snares.*
‖ Or, *we are consumed by that which they have throughly searched.*
† Heb. *a search searched.*

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in accordance with the scene in the howling wilderness, and a prediction exactly fulfilled, see 2 S. xviii. 8.

11. *But the king*] David elsewhere speaks thus of himself, Ps. lxi. 6; here with peculiar propriety, as realizing his restoration to kingly estate, after the ruin of his enemies.

sweareth by him] From Deut. vi. 13, it is clear that this expression refers to recognition of God, not as some (Hengst.) interpret it, to swearing by the king's name, as Joseph, "by the life of Pharaoh," Gen. xlii. 15, and Hannah, "as thy soul liveth," 1 S. i. 26. No such phrase is ever used of David.

that speak lies] The special guilt of David's accusers; see notes on Pss. xxxviii. 12, xli. 5—8.

PSALM LXIV.

This bears a close resemblance to many psalms which are ascribed to David, especially the seventh; nor is there any reason to question the statement in the inscription. The style is vigorous and animated, somewhat abrupt, and replete with archaisms found only in psalms of an early date. It contains a description of treacherous enemies, especially of slanderers, and though the occasion cannot be precisely determined, it belongs probably to the time when David first had reason to suspect the existence of the formidable conspiracy which drove him from Jerusalem.

Two strophes, each of four verses, are separated by one of two verses, 5, 6.

1. *in my prayer*] Or, "meditation." Cf. Ps. lv. 1, 2.

2. This points distinctly to two forms of danger, the secret conspiracy of which the king suspected the existence, and open outbursts of disaffection. "Insurrection" expresses the true sense of the Hebrew, which means a noisy tumultuous crowd. Jerome "a tumultu:" cf. Ps. lxii. 3. The same word is used Ps. ii. 1, "Why do the heathen *rage*?"

3. *their tongue*] All the psalms of this period dwell much on the slanders of David's enemies. They were in fact the immediate cause of his overthrow: see 2 S. xv. 2—6, and note on *v.* 5.

bend] The word properly applies to the bow, hence the paraphrastic version in the text. It would be simpler to translate the word "direct" or "aim." Thus also Ps. lviii. 7. The expression is probably chosen to denote the deliberate malignity with which the slanderer prepares his calumnies.

5. The first clause should be rendered **They strengthen for themselves an evil word.** The "evil word" is commonly regarded as equivalent to evil thing, or matter, but it evidently refers to the slander on which the hopes of the conspirators rest, and which they take care to strengthen. See the account of Absalom's proceeding, 2 S. xv. 3, 4. The charge of neglecting the administration of justice would perhaps tell even more forcibly upon the popular mind than David's great crime, which touched directly but a single family. See note on Ps. lviii. 1.

they commune] Literally, "tell," "narrate;" they talk over every detail of their scheme.

laying snares privily] Or, "to conceal their snares." One object of their discussions was to secure perfect secrecy.

Who shall see them?] Compare Ps. lix. 7. Godlessness is always represented as a special characteristic of David's enemies. He felt, and they felt, that, whatever his personal faults might be, he represented the cause of righteousness and true religion.

6. *They search out*] This verse presents difficulties of construction, but the general meaning is clear. It may be rendered **They devise iniquities,** (they say) **we have completed a well-devised device; and the inward** (thought) **of a man and his heart is deep.** The Psalmist hears them exulting in the secrecy of their plans, in the depth and subtlety of their thoughts. The

inward *thought* of every one *of them*, and the heart, *is* deep.

7 But God shall shoot at them *with* an arrow; suddenly † shall they be wounded.

† Heb. *their wound shall be.*

8 So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves: all that see them shall flee away.

9 And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing.

10 The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.

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last clause may be taken as a reflection of the Psalmist, but it has a peculiar force as expressing criminal exultation in the success of hypocrisy. The word "a man" points at an individual, most probably Ahithophel, to whom depth of thought and unfathomable malignity are peculiarly appropriate.

7. *But God shall shoot*] While they are bending their bow, adjusting their arrows, and taking deliberate aim, the shafts of God pierce them. The rapid transition of thought and vivid imagery are thoroughly Davidic. If the punctuation be retained we must render "And God shooteth at them an arrow suddenly, their wounds are there," *i.e.* they are already wounded, the wounds are instantaneous.

8. *So they shall make*, &c.] This version follows Kimchi, but presents an incongruous image. The Hebrew runs thus literally, "And they shall cause him to stumble; against them is their own tongue; they will shake their heads at each other, every one triumphing over them" (see Note below). Each clause has a distinct bearing upon the facts recorded in 2 S. xvii. 1—14. "They shall cause him to stumble," thus "Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel." "Their own tongue was against them," "for the Lord had appointed to *defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel*, to the intent that he might bring evil upon Absalom"—"and when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed," &c., *v.* 23. "They will shake their heads at each other" (such is the literal meaning of the Hebrew), sc. all who hear of this conspiracy, even every one who sees his desire upon them.

9. *wisely consider*] Cf. Job xxxiv. 27.

11. *The righteous shall be glad*] Cf. Job xxii. 19; Ps. xxxii. 11.

NOTE on PSALM LXIV. 8.

Lit. "and they shall make him stumble." This may possibly bear Dr Kay's rendering, "and men hurled him down stumbling;" or if we take "him" as referring to Ahithophel, "they will overthrow him," or by a common idiom "he will be overthrown by them," sc. by his own accomplices. This was literally the case. Each word is taken in its literal and proper sense; יכשילהו, Hiph., "cause to stumble." יתנודדו, from נוד, "shake," used especially of shaking the head as a gesture of mourning, or contempt for a fallen enemy; see Job xvi. 4. ראה בם, a phrase specially characteristic of David, "seeing his desire upon them," looking down upon them with exultation; see Pss. xxii. 17, xxxvii. 34, liv. 7.

PSALM LXV.

1 *David praiseth God for his grace.* 4 *The blessedness of God's chosen by reason of benefits.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm *and* Song of David.

PRAISE † waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed.

† Heb. *is silent.*

2 O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.

PSALM LXV.

For the probable date and author of the psalm, see below. A worshipper in God's courts, in his own name first, and then in that of his associates, describes (*v.* 1) the praise due to God in Zion, and the crowding of all men to His courts to worship. He bethinks him of his sins and the sins of his people, which God covers (*v.* 3); of the blessedness of those who have access to the source of pardon (*v.* 4); of the mighty deeds of Jehovah, always, in nature, and among the nations, by which His name is and will be known (*vv.* 5—8); and His special mercy celebrated in this hymn, of a prosperous harvest; of which the concluding verses contain a vivid painting (*vv.* 9—13).

1. *Praise waiteth*, &c.] If the punctuation of the received text be retained the marginal rendering is better. "Praise is silent, &c., or, (is given to Thee) in silence." Praise is fitly shewn to Thee by a holy silence (Note below),

† Heb. *Words*, or, *Matters of iniquities.*

3 † Iniquities prevail against me: *as for* our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.

4 Blessed *is the man whom* thou choosest, and causest to approach *unto thee*, *that* he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, *even* of thy holy temple.

5 *By* terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation; *who art* the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off *upon* the sea:

6 Which by his strength setteth fast the mountains; *being* girded with power:

7 Which stilleth the noise of the

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more expressive than words. See Ps. lxii. 1, marg. rendering, and *v.* 5; Hab. ii. 20; Zech. ii. 13. The silence intimated is unlike the sacred silence of the Greeks and Romans: it implies a soul filled with thoughts too big for utterance: these at last untie the tongue; and the psalm which follows is their expression.

and unto thee shall, &c.] The meaning is, "and (so) a vow to Thee is (rightly) performed."

2. *O thou that hearest*, &c.] The action seems present. "Unto Thee all flesh comes, to worship, and to pray to Him that heareth." Calvin remarks "that God can no more divest Himself of His attribute of hearing prayer than of being." The address to Him by this title contrasts Him with idols who hear not; Pss. cxv. 4—7, cxxxv. 16, 17, &c. The expression "*all flesh*" should not be strained to mean "all men," and much less "all creatures," as some (Hengsten., Hupfeld, etc.) interpret: it is a general expression (see Pss. lvi. 4, cxlv. 21), descriptive of a multitude of all sexes, ages, and conditions, that crowd to God's courts, in fact, and perhaps in sight of the Psalmist, and pray, and have an answer.

3. *Iniquities prevail against me*, &c.] The worshipper, when voice is given him, confesses the multitude of his sins, rising up to remembrance—and their pardon! "Iniquities have prevailed against me or mastered me: our transgressions, Thou dost cover them." The pronoun is emphatic—Jehovah alone thus pardons. The absence of the parallelism too is emphatic. We expect "our transgressions (Ps. xl. 12) are more in number than the hairs of our head;" but instead of this we have the assurance of pardon. The literal rendering of the original is (marg.) "*words* or *matters* of iniquities," in which the expressions in italics are not, perhaps, pleonastic, but suggest a long roll of sins, and many circumstances of them, which crowd the memory of the Psalmist (Pss. cv. 27, cxlv. 5, marg.). Note the change of number: the Psalmist first speaks of his own sins, then of the pardon, of them, and also, of the sins of all his associates. Note, too, the expression that "God covers sin out of sight," which is the import of the original rather than that He "*purges it away.*"

4. *Blessed*, &c.] The words still of the suppliant, "Blessed is the man whom Thou choosest, and dost bring nigh unto Thee to abide in Thy courts: we, who have this privilege, shall be full, or are full of the blessings of Thine house, of Thy holy sanctuary." The temple or sanctuary of God is described as His house, in which, as a princely host, He receives His chosen and bestows upon them all good (Pss. xxiii. 5, 6, xxvii. 4).

5. *By terrible things*, &c.] "By fearful *righteous* judgments dost Thou (rather than wilt Thou) *answer us*, *i. e.* hear and reply to us," &c. Deut. x. 21, 2 S. vii. 23, illustrate the fearful judgments done in times past for the chosen people, and now again to be done in the hour of need. *Righteous* as done against His enemies.

the confidence (or hope) [art Thou] *of all the ends of the earth*, &c., or "of all that are in the earth, every where, and of all in distant islands of the sea;" Hebr. "sea of distant ones," see Isai. lxvi. 19. The words do not express that all men in the earth and in the isles do, or will one day, hope in God; but simply that God is their Hope for a blessing or a curse, whether they know Him and feel for Him, or simply live by and through Him.

6. *Which by his strength*, &c.] "He in the beginning set fast upon their foundations, and now sustains, the mountains; girt He is (Ps. xviii. 32, also Ps. xciii. 1) with might, as a warrior with armour of proof." Notice the transition, from the address to God, to a description of His majesty and creative power: a similar transition occurs Ps. xciii. 1, 2 above quoted: it suggests to some commentators that the two verses 6, 7 are chanted by a chorus, which responds to the people, who recite the other parts. Note, too, that the subject of these two verses, though connected with the general purpose of the psalm, touches upon a different theme.

7. *Which stilleth*, &c.] "Which stills the raging seas, their raging waves, and the people's madness." The raging waves suggest the raging of a people in popular tumult: or a popular tumult, miraculously allayed, may have been an occasion of the psalm. The original resembles Isai. xvii. 12—14: if writ-

seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people.

8 They also that dwell in the uttermost parts are afraid at thy tokens: thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening ‖ to rejoice.

9 Thou visitest the earth, and ‖ waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, *which* is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it.

10 Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: ‖ thou settlest the furrows thereof: † thou makest it soft with showers: thou blessest the springing thereof.

11 Thou crownest † the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness.

12 They drop *upon* the pastures of

‖ Or, *to sing.*

‖ Or, *after thou hadst made it to desire* rain.

‖ Or, *thou causest* rain *to descend* into *the furrows thereof.*

† Heb. *thou dissolvest it.*

† Heb. *the year of thy goodness.*

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ten as some think in the time of Hezekiah, it may be an imitation of it.

8. *thy tokens*] *i.e.* signs of God's presence; miracles of mercy and judgment, such as were hinted at before, *v.* 5; or allusion may be made to some miracle of deliverance now unknown. *The outgoings of morning* are the east, from which morning is poetically said to go forth (Note 3). Note the sentiment! God's tokens fill the world with alarm; but His mercies (these are intended) fill east and west with songs of joy!

9. *Thou visitest*, &c.] This verse seems to come at last to the point aimed at from the first, the plenteousness of earth through the visits (Jer. xxvii. 22) of God. "Thou visitest (or, hast visited) the earth, and waterest it, and makest it rich abundantly. The river of God is full of water! Thou preparest corn for man, for it is Thou that so (*i.e.* abundantly) preparest it (the earth) for its nurture." As rain is mentioned (*v.* 10), it may be that instead of the rendering *waterest it* in *v.* 9 we should render "makest it plenteous," or "blessest it," as the Prayer-Book Version has it: then the words "Thou makest it rich abundantly," which follow, are simply an amplification. Probably the expression "the river of God," &c., begins a new sentence as above (Note 4). Is "the rain" intended by the *river of God*, or "stores of rain treasured up in the clouds"? or, is the sentence an exclamation in sight of a well-watered land, &c.? "God's stream is full of water!" The following *v.* (10) gives, it would seem, an example of such an exclamation in sight of a land cultivated and ready for God's blessing. It is hard to decide between the interpretations of "the river of God." The Arabs call rain "the river of God," says Schultens, quoted by Perowne, Vol. I. p. 485, 2nd ed.; but the expression is not natural, and none similar to it occurs in Scripture.—The general idea is manifest: God alone gives abundance, fills the rivers with water, and covers the land with corn, though man's labour seems to do something. In the original there is an alliteration which the translation cannot imitate.

10. *Thou waterest the ridges*, &c.] In the original the tenses in the first versicle seem to be imperative. "Water its ridges—lower its furrows—Thou softenest it with showers—Thou blessest the increase of it." So the LXX., Vulg., &c., and many moderns. A somewhat similar transition, from the imperative to the indicative, occurs Ps. lxxii. 1, 2. Nothing can more vividly paint the land waiting for God's blessing of rain than this sudden exclamation. All is done that man may do—the furrows are cut deep—the ridges stand straight—the seed is sown: "Now, O God, send the needful showers, and bless the increase!" This address would be most appropriate in the spring: and Tholuck suggests the spring as the time at which the psalm was written; but the conclusion, *v.* 13, is more suited to the time of harvest; and then *vv.* 9, 10, &c., describe the preparations for it.

11. *Thou crownest*, &c.] Lit. (as in the margin) "Thou hast crowned (*i.e.* with plenty) a year of Thy goodness (*i.e.* a year of mercies); and Thy paths (Hebr. tracks of chariot-wheels: compare Ps. xviii. 10, Deut. xxxiii. 26, &c.) drop fatness!" The word (עִטַּרְתָּ) *Thou crownest* is commonly followed by the accusative of the noun indicating the blessing dispensed (Ps. ciii. 4); in this case, "plenty." Mark the image of the next versicle: "Fullness and abundance follow in Thy train, and drop from Thy paths (see below, *v.* 12) whithersoever Thou goest, visiting the earth." Rosenm. compares Virg. 'Georg.' II. 392: peace and plenty follow the look of the image of the god of plenty: a pleasing fiction! Here the paths of the great Creator drop abundance, and His presence diffuses transports of joy; a truth impressed upon the mind of His chosen a thousand years before Virgil sang.

12. *They drop upon*, &c.] According to this rendering the meaning is that Jehovah's paths, like clouds (hence perhaps the P. B. V.), drop fatness upon scattered pastures in distant wildernesses (Job xxxviii. 26), and clothe with a garment of exultation the crowning tops of rising hills: but it is more consistent with the original to consider *the pastures of the wilderness*, *i.e.*

† Heb. *are girded with joy.*

the wilderness: and the little hills † rejoice on every side.

13 The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing.

patches of verdure in desolate wilderness, and *the little hills, i.e.* summits of verdant hills, described as spots visited by the Creator, and dropping fatness accordingly. This phrase *drop fatness* does not carry the idea of dropping abundance, like rain, from above: rather the idea of "abounding exceedingly" or "overflowing with plenty." So *v.* 12 contains two instances of Jehovah's paths in this sense dropping fatness. **The pastures of the wilderness drop: and the little hills are girded with joy.**

13. *The pastures*, &c.] "The pastures are *clothed* with flocks; the valleys so hidden with corn that they cannot be seen; they exult with joy; yea, they sing aloud." The article in the orig. is added to the word *flocks*, and seems to convey the idea that flocks are the fit decoration of pastures. The picture of hill and valley exulting in abundance would not be complete (some say) [Note 5] without the mention of man exulting and singing in the midst. But it is more in accordance with the spirit of Hebrew poetry (Isai. lv. 12; Jer. li. 48, &c.) to consider the valleys themselves and fields singing on account of the abundance of God's gifts: see too Virg. 'Georg.' IV. 461, &c.

Delitzsch, Perowne, &c., imagine this psalm to have been written upon the occasion of the Assyrian invasion (see Isai. xxxvii. 30); and interpret the inscription, "A Psalm and Song of David," as indicating the manner rather than the hand of David. But the expressions do not seem such as would have been chosen to describe deliverance by the miraculous destruction of the Assyrians. The subject seems, from *vv.* 9—13, to be a plentiful harvest, possibly (*vv.* 7 and 8) in a time of dangerous popular disturbance, or after miraculous deliverance from extreme peril. Whatever may have been the object of the psalm, it is remarkable, even among the psalms, for its realization of Jehovah's presence in nature and history, and for a love, trust, approach to Him, inexplicable, except upon the supposition of the truth of Jewish story. These characteristics, and also minute correspondences with Pss. lx. and lxii., generally esteemed Davidical (Hengst., &c.), suggest that David was the author: and the inscription, certainly, was not put in the front without cause. The mention of the temple in *v.* 4 seems an argument (but see Ps. lxviii. introd.) against the authorship of David. The mention of the *courts* of the temple has more weight, as the tabernacle had only one court. Also certain words and phrases remind us of psalms of the days of Hezekiah (*e.g.* Ps. xcvi.), and of Isaiah's later prophecies. Possibly the psalm may have received alterations in course of time; and been adapted to the temple-service from an original song of David.

NOTES on PSALM LXV.

1. Luther (in Delitzsch, I. 476), "O God! Thou art fitly praised in *the stillness of secret prayer;*" opposed, not so much to *the utterance of prayers with the lips*, as to *senseless verbiage*, and *the noisy bustle of worldlings.*

Some connect together the words "silence" and "praise," and render, "Silence-praise is Thine, O God, in Zion." The sense according to this arrangement is the same as that given, but the arrangement does not recommend itself by simplicity, nor by conformity with the style of Hebrew poetry. The version of the LXX. (σοὶ πρέπει ὕμνος), and Vulg. from which the Prayer-Book Version (Note 2) is derived, supposes a different punctuation of the word (דֳּמִיָּה) out of which the obscurity arises. Some critics (*e.g.* Ew., &c.) adopt this punctuation (*i.e.* דֳּמִיָּה), which however gives a common turn to the sentiment of *v.* 1.

2. The Prayer-Book Version adds "in Jerusalem" at the end of the verse.

3. By attraction, as it is called, the word may perhaps be applied to the evening; but the "outgoings of evening" is a phrase to which no parallel is found. The A.V. in some impressions puts a stop after "morning," and so avoids the incongruity. So, too, Zunz and others.

4. As in the Prayer-Book Version, which follows the LXX. and Vulg.: so too Kay, Zunz, Umbreit, Moll, &c.

5. Delitzsch; Ewald; Moll doubtfully;—"man shouts for joy: he sings."

PSALM LXVI.

1 *David exhorteth to praise God,* 5 *to observe his great works,* 8 *to bless him for his gracious benefits.* 12 *He voweth for himself religious service to God.* 16 *He declareth God's special goodness to himself.*

To the chief Musician, A Song *or* Psalm.

MAKE a joyful noise unto God, † all ye lands:

† Heb. *all the earth.*

2 Sing forth the honour of his name: make his praise glorious.

3 Say unto God, How terrible *art thou in* thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies †† submit themselves unto thee.

†† Or, *yield feigned obedience.* † Heb. *lie.*

4 All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee; they shall sing *to* thy name. Selah.

5 Come and see the works of God: *he is* terrible *in his* doing toward the children of men.

6 He turned the sea into dry *land:* they went through the flood on foot: there did we rejoice in him.

7 He ruleth by his power for ever; his eyes behold the nations: let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah.

8 O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard:

9 Which † holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved.

† Heb. *putteth.*

10 For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.

11 Thou broughtest us into the net; thou laidst affliction upon our loins.

Psalm LXVI.

This and the following psalms have certain peculiarities which distinguish them from the preceding. They are not attributed to David; in the inscriptions they bear a double designation, equivalent to "hymn," "psalm," *i.e.* "a psalm of praise and joy:" the name Elohim is almost exclusively used, and they are evidently intended for public recitation in the temple. All these indications lead to the conclusion that they are compositions of one of the great Levitical families, to whom the temple-services were committed by David.

This psalm celebrates a great deliverance; it speaks of a season of severe trial and affliction; but although commentators are generally agreed that it is of later date than the reign of David, it is doubtful whether it belongs to the time of Hezekiah, or to the period following the restoration from the Babylonian captivity: of the two more probably to the former; for references to the long and bitter sufferings of the latter period are generally more specific; here the time of affliction would seem to have passed away speedily and completely. It may however have been composed in the reign of one of Hezekiah's predecessors. The expressions are applicable to many events recorded in the historical books, especially to some in the reigns of Asa and Jehoshaphat, and there is more of hopefulness and joy than generally breathes in the utterances of an age when the prophetic spirit felt the near approach of impending judgments.

The metres are regular, and distinctly marked by Selah, except at the close of *v.* 11, where it is not needed.

1. *all ye lands*] Or, "all the earth." The whole world is called upon to rejoice in the manifestation of God's righteousness, which must needs be for the permanent good of His creatures. There is however in this, and throughout the psalm (see especially *vv.* 4, 8), a clear reference to the Messianic hopes which lay deep in the heart of every true Israelite.

3. *submit themselves*] The word literally means "lie," *i. e.* yield feigned and reluctant obedience. See note on Ps. xviii. 44. Our Prayer-Book Version, "shall be found liars unto thee," expresses the sense more exactly.

6. *He turned the sea*] *i. e.* the Red Sea at the Exodus, and the Jordan at the entrance into Canaan; events which delivered Israel, established its dominion, and were pledges of its future permanence. Such allusions are especially numerous about the time of the Babylonish captivity, but are too common and natural a topic to determine the date of this psalm.

9. *holdeth*] Or, "setteth;" the word implies deliverance from a state of extreme peril.

to be moved] The state therefore was not one of utter ruin; these expressions point to a time when Israel, though afflicted and severely tried, still retained its national life and independence.

10. *tried us*] The Hebrew word denotes a fiery trial, as in a furnace. The metaphor is common in most languages. Cf. Pss. xii. 6, xvii. 3; Isai. xlviii. 10; 1 Pet. i. 6, 7.

11. *the net*] This is probably the true meaning of the Hebrew word; which, however, may denote "a fortress or stronghold," in the special sense of a place of confinement. The Israelites are represented as animals caught in the hunter's snares, and then shut up in

12 Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a † wealthy *place*.

† Heb. *moist.*

13 I will go into thy house with burnt offerings: I will pay thee my vows,

14 Which my lips have † uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble.

† Heb. *opened.*

15 I will offer unto thee burnt sacrifices of † fatlings, with the incense of rams; I will offer bullocks with goats. Selah.

† Heb. *marrow.*

16 Come *and* hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.

17 I cried unto him with my mouth, and he was extolled with my tongue.

18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear *me:*

19 *But* verily God hath heard *me;* he hath attended to the voice of my prayer.

20 Blessed *be* God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.

PSALM LXVII.

1 *A prayer for the enlargement of God's kingdom,* 3 *to the joy of the people,* 6 *and the increase of God's blessings.*

To the chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm *or* Song.

GOD be merciful unto us, and bless us; *and* cause his face to shine † upon us; Selah.

† Heb. *with us.*

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a place of confinement: an expression applicable to more than one epoch in the national history. It is used specially of David's condition in exile under Saul, 1 S. xxii. 4, &c.

affliction] The word denotes heavy pressure, as of an overladen beast of burden. Cf. Ps. lv. 3, where it is rendered "oppression."

12. *ride over our heads*] Two metaphors are supposed to be combined, riding over the land, taking possession of the fortified places, and trampling on its strength; but it seems more natural to refer to the representations, very common on Egyptian monuments, of a conqueror driving his chariot over his prostrate foes.

but thou broughtest] The suddenness of this transition has many parallels in the psalms. It seems to indicate the speedy and complete dispersion of an invading force.

a wealthy place] Lit. "abundance." The defeat of the enemies appears to have been followed by a season of great abundance, as on the occasion celebrated in the preceding psalm. The old versions generally use a word which denotes "refreshment," and Hupf. would alter the reading, but without sufficient cause.

14. *uttered*] Lit. "opened" (marg.), but the word "uttered" gives the true meaning, and should not be altered. It is used with special reference to vows, Judg. xi. 35.

15. *the incense*] *i. e.* the smoke ascending as a cloud from the burnt sacrifice, which is always represented as a sweet savour acceptable as a symbol of the offerer's devotion. The whole of this clause is more suitable to a king than to a subject. See note on Ps. li. last verse.

16. *for my soul*] This again points to an individual, but to one who represents the nation, whose personal characteristics affected the whole state for weal or for woe. We seem to hear David speaking, though the words doubtless might befit any of his successors under similar circumstances.

18. *If I regard*] The word "regard" is happily chosen to express the deliberate approval of iniquity: "had I regarded iniquity with complacency, entertained it deliberately in my heart." The writer is fully conscious of sins of infirmity, error or ignorance, but not of presumptuous sin. Compare Job xxxi. 26, xxxvi. 21; Hab. i. 13; Prov. xxviii. 9.

20. *from me*] The expression in Hebrew is peculiar and emphatic, "from *being* with me;" the mercy which ever abideth with me is not withdrawn.

Psalm LXVII.

This was evidently composed for liturgical use; its date is uncertain, but it is probably later than David's time. The great thought is longing for the conversion of the world, as a result of peculiar manifestations of divine goodness to Israel; when God's face shines fully upon His people all nations will be attracted and won, and the reign of righteousness will be established. This is therefore, in the highest and most spiritual sense, a Messianic psalm; not indeed, strictly speaking, predictive, but expressing hopes and anticipations completely fulfilled by the manifestation of God in Christ.

The structure is graceful, resembling that of early psalms; the introductory strophe marked by "Selah" is followed by two strophes, each of three verses, divided also by Selah.

1. *God be merciful unto us*, &c.] This is taken from the High-priest's blessing in Num. vi. 24—26; but with a striking and important

2 That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.

3 Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

4 O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and †govern the nations upon earth. Selah.

† Heb. *lead.*

5 Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

6 *Then* shall the earth yield her increase; *and* God, *even* our own God, shall bless us.

7 God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.

PSALM LXVIII.

1 A prayer at the removing of the ark. 4 An exhortation to praise God for his mercies, 7 for his care of the church, 19 for his great works.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm *or* Song of David.

LET [a]God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee †before him.

[a] Numb. 10. 35.

† Heb. *from his face.*

2 As smoke is driven away, *so* drive *them* away: as wax melteth

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variation. It substitutes Elohim for Jehovah. Thus the name Elohim occurs in the later, that of Jehovah in the older formula: this is irreconcileable with some modern speculations as to the use of the two names. The reason for the change appears to be that in most of the liturgical psalms, which were composed by the leaders of the Levitical choirs, the name Elohim is generally, though not exclusively, used. This may be because that name specially denotes the majesty and might of the Deity: whereas the High-priest in blessing the people uses the other name, which speaks most distinctly of covenanted privileges.

upon us] Or, "with us," abiding with us, our protector and guide. Cf. Ps. lxvi. 20, Heb. In Numbers the word "upon" is used.

2. *That thy way*] A remarkable prayer; the Psalmist directly states that the effect of God's goodness to Israel will be the conversion of the world, cf. Ps. xcviii. 3. It is to be observed that in this and the next verse three distinct words are now used to designate foreign nations; they are regarded under the various aspects of foreigners, races, communities: without losing their permanent characteristics they will be united in one religious community. In this verse the word rendered "nations" means **Gentiles.**

4. *for thou shalt*] The reason why the nations shall rejoice is stated to be the establishment of a universal kingdom of righteousness. This psalm brings one stream of Messianic prophecy, which presents the approach of a perfect manifestation of God, near to the point of junction with the other, which announces the advent and reign of a perfect King (see Introduction, § 18).

govern] Better as marg., **lead.** Lit. "and nations on the earth Thou wilt lead them;" be their guide: a promise of peculiar graciousness; cf. Pss. xxiii. 3, xxxi. 3; used elsewhere only of God's faithful and tried servants.

6. *Then shall the earth*] Or, "The land hath given her increase." This may be an expression of thankfulness for an abundant harvest, in which the Psalmist sees the sign or pledge of higher blessings. It is, however, more probably predictive, announcing the certain result of divine blessings. It is taken verbatim from Lev. xxvi. 4. Cf. Ps. lxxxv. 12.

Psalm LXVIII.

After an introduction in which Jehovah's might and mercy are described, *vv.* 1—6; His miracles in the wilderness, *vv.* 7—10, and victories at the head of His people, *vv.* 11—15, are referred to with astonishing force. His choice of Mount Zion to dwell upon, and His dwelling thereon with power, surrounded by His innumerable train, are the subjects of *vv.* 15—23. His visible ascents to it at various periods, attended by the representatives of the tribes, in celebration of His triumphs over His foes, and probably with special reference to His first triumphant ascent (2 S. vi.), are portrayed *vv.* 24—27. The remainder of the psalm anticipates His future conquests, and predicts the subjection, in coming days, of the whole world to His rule.

The title ascribes the psalm to David. The mention of the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali in *v.* 27, in connection with Benjamin and Judah, as representatives of the Northern and Southern divisions of the kingdom respectively, is inconsistent with a date subsequent to the secession of the tribes. The prominence of Egypt and Ethiopia *v.* 31, and silence touching Babylon and Assyria, favour the supposition of a very early date. The style is abrupt, fragmentary, rugged, astonishingly graphic and forcible, and bespeaks an age of earliest poetry. A late date, as after the exile (Gesen., Hupfeld, Ewald, Olshausen, J., &c.), against common opinion, against the inscription, and the many marks of antiquity occurring in the psalm, seems intolerable.

The mention of the temple in *v.* 29 is not decisive against the Davidic origin of the

before the fire, *so* let the wicked perish at the presence of God.

† Heb. *rejoice with gladness.*

3 But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them †exceedingly rejoice.

4 Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH, and rejoice before him.

5 A father of the fatherless, and

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psalm: see Ps. lxv. 4. The word translated *temple* may mean "tabernacle," and is certainly, in Ps. v. 7 (where see note), applied to the tabernacle: see also Pss. xi. 4, xviii. 6: and 1 S. i. 9.

Some imagine the psalm to have been composed for the occasion mentioned in 2 S. vi. 12, and 1 Chro. xv., when the ark of God was transferred from the house of Obededom to Zion. But David wrote a different psalm (1 Chro. xvi. 7) for that occasion (Note 1); and the early part of this psalm is not appropriate to it. The mention too of the temple, or sanctuary, in *v.* 29 is rather suggestive of the idea that, when the psalm was written, the sanctuary had been some time established in Zion. Some imagine that it was written when the ark went out, as in 2 S. xi. 11, upon an expedition against a neighbouring foe. But the latter part of the psalm, *v.* 28 &c., seems unsuitable to such hypothesis. The supposition that it is a song of triumph on the return of the ark from an expedition against a vanquished foe (De Wette, &c.) is plausible, but no special word points decisively to such a narrowing of its purport. The description given above of the contents indicates the thread which connects its parts, at first sight unconnected. It is a song of national thanksgiving for mercies and triumphs vouchsafed up to the day of its composition; followed by deeply earnest, we may say Messianic, anticipations of victories over the whole world, to follow from Jehovah's choice of Zion.

Many interpretations of passages in it, as of *vv.* 14, 15, 30, must be looked upon as scarcely more than conjectures. Throughout it is most obscure; and thirteen words in it occur nowhere else.

The sacred name Elohim appears twenty-three times in the psalm; but also Jah in *v.* 4; Jehovah in *v.* 16; Adonai in *vv.* 11, 17; Shaddai in *v.* 14, &c. The latter name occurs in Ps. xci. 1; Num. xxiv. 4, 16; Job, passim; and seems highly poetical. No reliable argument as to date or author can, as it would seem, be drawn from these names.

Resemblances are noticed between places of the psalm and of Isaiah. Thus *vv.* 4, 6 resemble Isai. xl. 3, lviii. 7. The spirit and manner of the psalm do not in the least resemble those of Isaiah; but suggest the idea of a composition entirely original, though embodying, it may be, portions of more ancient songs as parts of its design. According to the principle to which we have adhered throughout (see the Introduction), we regard this psalm, agreeably with its inscription, as written by David, in the absence of any arguments which prove the said authority to be delusive in this case.

The great difference of opinion which exists among commentators, some accounting this psalm one of the very earliest, and some, one of the very latest, shews how impossible it is to settle the question of its date by internal evidence. The original song of David may have received additions (Hengst., &c.) in later times for temple-service, which now it is scarcely possible to separate from the original composition. In the Jewish ritual the psalm is used at Pentecost, the Feast of Thanksgiving for Harvest.

1, 2. *Let God arise*, &c.] When the ark of God moved from its resting-place at night, Num. x. 35, Moses said, *Rise up*, O Jehovah, *and let Thine enemies be scattered.* In the place of Numbers quoted, the holy name "Jehovah," and the imperative *rise up*, occur. In the psalm the name "Elohim" is substituted for Jehovah, and the 3rd person for the 2nd. The force of *vv.* 1, 2, 3 seems increased by rendering the Hebrew future as present: so they describe the simple fact: "God arises; His enemies are scattered; those that hate Him flee before His face. As smoke is driven away, leaving no trace, Thou dost drive them away: as wax melts before the fire, the wicked perish at the presence of God." The *wicked* are the enemies of God and His chosen; the *righteous* are His people, Pss. xiv. 5, xxxiii. 1, &c. Similar passages occur in Pss. xxxvii. 20, xcvii. 5; Hos. xiii. 3.

4. *Sing unto God*, &c.] Lit. "Sing unto God; sing praises to His name; make a way for Him that rideth over the deserts: His name is Jah (or in Jah): and rejoice before Him." The reading of the A. V., *extol Him that rideth upon the heavens*, appears to come from the Targum; so too M. Mendelssohn, "Macht Ihm Bahn der durch Aetherwüste fährt!" The addition to it in the P. B. V., "as it were upon an horse," appears to be made simply to amplify the idea that went before, or for the sake of the measure. The image presented to us in the literal rendering is that of a king travelling through the waste, for whom a way is made. A similar image, Isai. xl. 3, lvii. 14; Ps. xviii. 10. *Jah* is the expressive abbreviated form of Jehovah, familiar to all from its occurrence in Hallelujah. "His name is in Jah:" His essence, unchanging, eternal, self existing, is expressed

a judge of the widows, *is* God in his holy habitation.

† Heb. *in a house.*

6 God setteth the solitary †in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry *land*.

7 O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness; Selah:

8 The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: *even* Sinai itself *was moved* at the presence of God, the God of Israel.

† Heb. *shake out.*

9 Thou, O God, didst †send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst †confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary.

† Heb. *confirm it.*

10 Thy congregation hath dwelt therein: thou, O God, hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor.

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in His ancient time-honoured title. See Exod. vi. 3.

5. *a judge*] *i. e.* a defender or avenger. See Exod. xxii. 22; Deut. x. 17, 18.

in his holy habitation] *i. e.* in heaven where He abides.

6. *God setteth the solitary*, &c.] God setteth the solitary in families; or, according to the marginal reading, **in a house** or **home**. The P. B. V. misses the sense, "He is the God that maketh men to be of one mind in an house," &c. It comes apparently from the LXX. (ὁ Θεὸς κατοικίζει μονοτρόπους ἐν οἴκῳ, κ. τ. λ.) and Vulg. (qui inhabitare facit unius moris in domo). These authorities seem to have interpreted the word (יְחִידִים) from the sense of "uniting" implied in יחד.

he bringeth out those, &c.] The import is, "He bringeth out of captivity captives, and restoreth to prosperity." The allusion is, in both clauses, to the wanderers in the wilderness. Some of them reached a home in the land of promise, but the most part perished through their rebellion in the waste. Cf. Ps. cvii. 4, 40; Heb. iii. 17. The allusion naturally leads to the passionate enthusiastic address which follows.

7, 8. *O God, when thou*, &c.] The miracles of the march: and first, the appearance of God in Sinai, Ex. xix. 16, 18, the most signal of all.—*Selah*, see Ps. iii. 2 and note. The description of the miracles of the desert moves the deepest soul of the Psalmist, and calls for special musical accompaniment.

8. *the heavens also dropped*, &c.] We read in Judg. v. 4, *the heavens dropped, the clouds also dropped water*, so that we may understand by the phrase of *the heavens dropping*, the floods of rain which accompanied the awful storm of thunder and lightning: Ex. xix. 16. Thunder, lightning, and a thick cloud, are described as upon the mount.

even Sinai, &c.] The lit. rendering is rather "that Sinai," or "yon Sinai" (δεικτικῶς; as if it were enough to point to it and mention its name, to describe what occurred), "at the presence of God." The words "was moved" are not in the original, but the omission of the verb descriptive of what occurred is not without force: the full expression may be gathered from the original place, Judg. ubi supr. In Ps. lxxviii. 54, "that mountain" (so the word should be rendered) means "that well-known mountain." Ps. civ. 25, "that sea" is "that sea" of which the name is enough. Ps. xlviii. 14, "this God."

9. *Thou, O God*, &c.] The P. B. V. renders, "Thou, O God, sentest a gracious rain upon Thine inheritance, and refreshedst it when it was weary." The pause in the Hebr. is after "God:" "Thou didst send a plentiful rain, O God: and Thine inheritance when aweary Thou didst refresh!"

The rain is metaphorical, and signifies the abundant blessings of manna (Exod. xvi. 4; Ps. lxxviii. 24), food, water, &c., through which the wanderers were preserved. God's "people" are meant by *His inheritance*.

10. *Thy congregation*, &c.] The word rendered here *congregation* is of doubtful import. The LXX. render "Thy living creatures," Jerome, "Thy creatures," others, "Thy flock." See Mic. vii. 14, 15; Ps. lxxiv. 19, in which the terms "congregation" and "poor ones" are again coupled. In *v.* 30 the same word is rendered "company." The meaning is, "Thy people dwelt there safely, guarded by Thee against innumerable foes." The description is still of the march, and *therein* seems to refer to the waste.

prepared] *i. e.* "a table in the wilderness," 1 Chro. xii. 39.

the poor] Sing., *i. e.* the needy and toil-worn wanderer.

From the march, through the wilderness to the borders of the promised land, the Psalmist naturally turns, *vv.* 11—14, to the victories, by which, in times following, it was obtained and secured. The victory of Deborah and Barak is however, it would seem, chiefly, if not exclusively, in his thoughts. Graphic, vigorous sketches of circumstances connected with it seem added, without attention to historical order. The great obscurity of the psalm may arise in part from its embodying fragments of earliest psalmody unaltered. The first verse is taken, as has been noticed, from the book of Numbers; *vv.* 7, 8, from the Song of Deborah; others may be taken, for example, from "the book of the wars of the

11 The Lord gave the word: great *was* the †company of those that published *it*.

12 Kings of armies †did flee apace: and she that tarried at home divided the spoil.

13 Though ye have lien among the pots, *yet shall ye be as* the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.

14 When the Almighty scattered kings ‖in it, it was *white* as snow in Salmon.

15 The hill of God *is as* the hill of Bashan; an high hill *as* the hill of Bashan.

† Heb. *army.*

† Heb. *did flee, did flee.*

‖ Or, *for her, she was.*

Lord," Num. xxi. 14 ('Plain Commentary,' Vol. I. p. 443), and so contain allusions to the interpretation of which we have no clue.

11. *The Lord gave*] Or, **gives** the word, *i. e.* of command; and victory follows, as in the beginning light and life followed His word; Gen. i. 3; Ps. xxxiii. 9.

great was the company, &c.] Heb. "the women publishing, or proclaiming the glad news, are, or were, a great host:" or, "a great host of women sang the song of triumph." So the women sang a song of triumph when Pharaoh's hosts were destroyed, Exod. xv. 20. So Deborah sang, Judg. v. So, when David slew Goliath, the women sang, 1 S. xviii. 6. See also 2 S. i. 20.

12. *Kings of armies did flee*, &c.] The action is present; **Kings of armies**, opposed to Jehovah God of armies, (as in the margin) **flee, flee away**; see Judg. v. 3, 19. "They leave a mighty spoil, in which the women who tarry at home (Judg. v. 24, cf. Eur. 'Hec.' 1275, οἰκουρός) share, and distribute to the household." See also Judg. v. 30, where the mother of Sisera anticipates the rich spoil that would fall to her lot through Sisera's triumph. It is possible that we have here the words of the original song of victory.

13. *Though ye have lien*, &c.] It was noticed that much of the psalm is an imitation of the Song of Deborah. Cf. *vv.* 8, 9, with *v.* 5 of the song, and *vv.* 11, 12, with *v.* 19, &c. Here the address of *v.* 16 of the song seems to be imitated: "Why abodest thou among the sheepfolds to hear the bleatings of the flocks?" So now, "What! dwell ye among the sheepfolds?" (Note 2, infr.), or, "Will ye lie among the sheepfolds?—The wings of a dove are covered with silver, and her feathers with pale green gold;" an expression, abrupt, allusive, and perhaps ironical. The tribes who stay away from the fight are taunted, as in the verse of the Song of Deborah alluded to, with enjoying a country life, while Jehovah's battles are fought by others. According to this interpretation, the words, "What! dwell ye among sheepfolds?" &c., or, "Will ye lie among the sheepfolds?" &c., are the remonstrances addressed to the absent tribes: and the following words, "The wings of a dove," &c., are the supposed excuses of the indifferent ones in the midst of the flocks, herds, doves, of their rustic life, repeated in the address with a bitter irony.

14. *in it*] *i. e.* in the land. The literal meaning of the words that follow is, **it snowed in Salmon**; or, **Thou dost snow in Salmon**. Some interpret, "When the Almighty scattered kings in the land, it was covered with booty and the bodies of the slain, as Salmon with snow in winter;" the idea being the same as in 'Æn.' v. 865, XII. 36; Ovid, 'Fasti,' I. 558. But the words of the original must be strained to bear it. Neither booty nor the bodies of the slain, nor, of course, any comparison of them with the snow, are mentioned. Salmon is seldom or never covered with snow; it is a low dark mountain near Sichem, and no reason is apparent why it should be chosen as the image of a snowy mountain. In all likelihood the words are again extracted from a more ancient song, and the allusion in them may be undiscoverable. Herder ('Ebr. P.' II. p. 8) supposes them to be such an extract; and further to be the words of the indifferentists above introduced, excusing themselves for their absence from the war on the ground that it was winter, and that snow covered the summit of the little low hill of Salmon. Others consider the words as proverbial, "When the Almighty scattered kings in the land, it was snow-white on Salmon;" the contrast of joy and sorrow in victory and discomfiture being like the contrast between Salmon, the dark mountain, black with woods (Judg. ix. 48), or clad in a vesture of snow. But in the original there is no mention of whiteness or darkness, and the interpretation supposes the mount Salmon in its dark mantle of wood, or white covering of snow, to be so familiar to all as to require only the briefest allusion in order to point a comparison intelligible to all. The simple literal rendering of the words is so uncertain that the import of the whole passage can only be to a great extent a matter of conjecture.

15. *The hill of God is as the hill*, &c.] Heb. "a mountain of God (see Ps. xxxvi. 6) is the mountain of Bashan: a mountain of peaks is the mountain of Bashan: why look ye askance, or, enviously, ye high-peaked mountains? This is the mountain which God desires," &c. The A.V. "Why leap ye," &c. seems to come from

16 Why leap ye, ye high hills? *this is* the hill *which* God desireth to dwell in; yea, the LORD will dwell *in it* for ever.

17 The chariots of God *are* twenty thousand, [1]*even* thousands of angels: the Lord *is* among them, *as in* Sinai, in the holy *place*.

[1] Or, even *many thousands*.

[b] Eph. 4. 8. 18 [b]Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts [†]for men; yea, *for* the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell *among them*.

[†] Heb. *in the man*.

19 Blessed *be* the Lord, *who* daily loadeth us *with benefits*, *even* the God of our salvation. Selah.

20 *He that is* our God *is* the God of salvation; and unto GOD the Lord *belong* the issues from death.

21 But God shall wound the head

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the Targum, Quare subsilitis, &c.; so too Luther.

A change of subject. The mountain-chain of Bashan, lofty, many-peaked, rocky, precipitous, looking down as from a world without, upon the gently undulating, lowly hill of Zion, is addressed as though regarding with contempt and envy the choice of God to dwell upon the latter for ever: see Ps. cxxxii. 14; 1 K. viii. 13. Bashan extended to the foot of Mount Hermon, so that the chain of Hermon, or Anti-Libanus, may be meant here (see Stanley's 'S. and P.,' 1st ed. p. 114, note); or Bashan may be used in a general way to signify a land outside the promised land, and unconnected with it. Afterwards, *v.* 22, it is used to typify, generally, a wild inaccessible distant region, out of which none could bring back, except God. The joyous, exulting, triumphant air of the original can hardly be imitated in any rendering.

17. *The chariots of God*, &c.] Lit. "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, thousands, and again thousands. The Lord is in the midst of them: (it is a) Sinai in holiness, or, in the sanctuary." The chariots of God, the invisible hosts by which He is surrounded (2 K. ii. 11, vi. 17; see also Dan. vii. 10; Matt. xxvi. 53), are in multitude innumerable. (See Note 3.) Jehovah is in the midst of them as once on Sinai, in majesty ineffable, Deut. xxxiii. 2: or, Jehovah is in the midst, (Zion) is Sinai with its majestic accompaniments: or, Jehovah is in the midst; ('tis) Sinai in majesty and holiness: or, once again, Jehovah, &c. (all) Sinai is in the sanctuary. The purport is plain; Jehovah the heavenly King is manifest on Zion, as once on Sinai. The last-named rendering expresses the meaning indirectly.

18. *Thou hast ascended*, &c.] Otherwise, "Thou hast ascended to Thy throne in heaven (see *v.* 34, and Pss. vii. 7, xviii. 16, xciii. 4). Thou hast led captive the conquered enemy, received gifts among men, or, consisting of men (marg. in the man), *i. e.* of men vanquished by the glory of the Victor, and devoted to Him: and (subdued) even the rebellious, that Jah Elohim should dwell among them." See 2 Cor. vi. 16; John xiv. 23. Jehovah as God ascends to His throne above; as Leader of His visible hosts, He leads captive the vanquished; all people give Him gifts, 2 S. viii. 2, 6; the obstinate and rebellious too are subdued, and become part of His possession. So close is the relationship of Jehovah to David and to his people, that the offices of King dwelling and ruling in Heaven, and of the present ruler of His hosts, are mingled together. The precise rendering of the original is doubtful: but of the general sense there is no doubt.

The LXX. render "Thou receivedst gifts among men; yea even the rebellious, for the purpose of dwelling:" of which the sense is doubtful. St Paul, Eph. iv. 8, quotes the words differently, "Having ascended on high he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." Does he quote the sense of the Targum, which says: "Captivam duxisti captivitatem, docuisti verba Legis: dedisti dona filiis hominum"? or, is it not most reasonable to say that he referred to the words as they would naturally be interpreted in the light of Christ's Ascension, and sending down of His gifts to man; and that he quotes rather the spirit and substance of the passage than its actual terms? Jehovah ascended to Zion (and to heaven) followed by the vanquished, and laden with gifts, to dwell among His people always, and to give gifts, as *v.* 19 implies. Christ ascended into heaven, and gave gifts of grace to His people: and to His office in heaven the following verses apply, as well as to that of Jehovah Himself. The Syr. and Arab. versions both interpret the passage as the Targum.

19. *Blessed be the Lord*, &c.] Otherwise, "Blessed be Jehovah day by day; if one layeth a burden on us, our God is our salvation." Or, "Blessed, &c.; day by day He beareth our burdens." The thought of this verse is amplified in *v.* 20: *issues*, *i. e.* means of escape, Eccl. vii. 18 (Hebr.). As God is merciful to His friends, so to *His enemies*, *vv.* 21—23, unless they repent, He is strict in execution of chastisement.—*Selah*, see above, *v.* 7.

21. *But*] Or, **Surely.** The *hairy scalp* means "the head thickly covered with hair" (as of Absalom or Samson), indicating youth and strength.

of his enemies, *and* the hairy scalp of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses.

22 The Lord said, I will bring again from Bashan, I will bring *my people* again from the depths of the sea:

‖ Or, *red.* 23 That thy foot may be ‖dipped in the blood of *thine* enemies, *and* the tongue of thy dogs in the same.

24 They have seen thy goings, O God; *even* the goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary.

25 The singers went before, the players on instruments *followed* after; among *them were* the damsels playing with timbrels.

26 Bless ye God in the congregations, *even* the Lord, ‖from the fountain of Israel.

‖ Or, ye that are *of the fountain of Israel.*

27 There *is* little Benjamin *with* their ruler, the princes of Judah ‖*and* their council, the princes of Zebulun, *and* the princes of Naphtali.

‖ Or, with *their company.*

28 Thy God hath commanded thy strength: strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us.

29 Because of thy temple at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents unto thee.

22, 23. *The Lord said*, &c.] Lit. "I will bring again from Bashan: I will bring again from the depths of the sea:" see Amos ix. 2, 3. The reference is not to Jehovah's people, as the A. V. interprets, but rather to His enemies, in continuation of *v.* 21, and in connection with *v.* 23. "Though Mine enemies," He says, "hide themselves in the forests of Bashan, see *v.* 15, or in the depths of the sea, I will bring them back; that thou mayest slay them and dip thy foot in blood; and that the tongue of thy dogs may lap up of it." The exact rendering is, "that thou mayest move, or shake, thy foot in blood; the tongue of thy dogs (may have) from the enemy its portion." (See Note 4.)

24. *They have seen thy goings*, &c.] Again a change of subject: description of a solemn visible procession to Mount Zion. The invisible train was hinted at above, *v.* 17. The phrase *Thy goings* is a poetical amplification, as in *v.* 35; or it indicates that such processions occurred often, on special occasions of triumph. *They have seen, i. e.* men, friends and foes, have seen, and do see, from day to day. *My King* is emphatic; it is the King as well as Lord Who heads this procession.

in the sanctuary] Cf. *v.* 17. The order of procession: first the singers; next the minstrels, or players upon instruments, *in the midst of the damsels* who sing the words, *v.* 26, and play upon the timbrels. The damsels are on either side of the procession.

26. *Bless ye God*, &c.] Or, according to the marg. reading, "Bless God, &c., ye that are from the fountain of Israel," *i. e.* "Bless God, ye that spring from Israel, the source of this people." Similarly Isai. xlviii. 1, li. 1. *In the congregations, i.e.* in full assemblies, as this day, of the people. The P. B. V. renders the second clause, "from the ground of the heart."

27. *There is little Benjamin*, &c.] Hints descriptive of the representatives of the tribes taking part in the procession. The lit. rendering is, "There (שָׁם, in that place,) is little Benjamin, their ruler, the princes of Judah, their company; the princes of Zebulun, the princes of Naphtali." *Benjamin* is named, it may be, as the tribe of Saul the first king and conqueror, in whose limits too the sanctuary lay: Deut. xxxiii. 12; Josh. xviii. 11, &c. He is styled *little*, as the youngest son of Jacob; or in reference to 1 S. ix. 21: *their ruler*, or leader, *i. e.* ruling or leading those that take part in the procession; or, it may be, with reference to the preceding verses, and to Saul the great Benjamite chief, (see 1 S. xiv. 47,) "their conqueror," *i. e.* subduer of the nations around. *Judah* is described as the tribe of David; and the words "their closely compacted company" or "council" or "stone," *i. e.* bulwark, (Gen. xlix. 24,) are added, to indicate the strength of the great tribe. Two of the northern tribes are specified for all. Perhaps Zebulun and Naphtali are selected in consequence of the mention of them in the Song of Deborah (see Judg. v. 18). The P. B. V. renders the verse almost as above.

28. *Thy God hath commanded*, &c.] Jehovah is now seated on Zion. The Psalmist (in conclusion of this song of triumph), in a spirit of divine prescience, prays that His power may soon spread everywhere. "Thy God, O Israel, hath commanded (or ordained, Ps. cxxxiii. 3; Lev. xxv. 21) thy strength, *i. e.* thy dominion or power. *Strengthen, O God*, &c. Complete the work already begun. Threaten with Thy vengeance, unless they yield obedience, the company of spearmen (*v.* 30), the multitude of bulls (infr.), with the calves of the people (infr.), unless they will submit themselves with offerings of silver. Scatter the people that delight in war."

29. *Because of*, &c.] *i.e.* "Out of respect for Thy temple at or over (Stanley's 'S. and P.' p. 171) Jerusalem, kings shall bring presents unto Thee." This rendering of the particle (מִן) *because of* is uncommon. Per-

30 Rebuke [1] the company of spearmen, the multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the people, *till every one* submit himself with pieces of silver: [1] scatter thou the people *that* delight in war.

31 Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.

32 Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises unto the Lord; Selah:

33 To him that rideth upon the heavens of heavens, *which were* of old; lo, he doth [†] send out his voice, *and that* a mighty voice.

34 Ascribe ye strength unto God: his excellency *is* over Israel, and his strength *is* in the [1] clouds.

35 O God, *thou art* terrible out of thy holy places: the God of Israel *is* he that giveth strength and power unto *his* people. Blessed *be* God.

[1] Or, *the beasts of the reeds.*

[1] Or, *he scatter-eth.*

[†] Heb. *give.*

[1] Or, *heavens.*

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haps it is best (see *v.* 35) to consider the sentence as abrupt and elliptical. "Out of Thy temple at Jerusalem (shall go forth such grace and power that) kings shall acknowledge it and bring presents accordingly." Dr Kay compares with the prophecy Isai. xviii. 7; Ps. lxxvi. 11, 12, and 2 Chro. xxxii. 23, for its partial fulfilment. It should be noticed that some authorities render the particle (מִן) "out of" or "beginning with" Thy temple at Jerusalem. Thus the idea is the same as Luke xxiv. 47: also see Pss. cx. 2, cxxxv. 21.

30. *Rebuke*, &c.] Or, "Rebuke (Pss. ix. 5, lxxx. 16) the beasts of the reeds (as in the marg.), the multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the peoples: each (now) submits himself with pieces of silver: He has scattered the peoples that delight in war," &c. The beast of the reeds (see Isai. xix. 6; Ezek. xxix. 3, 4) is supposed to be the crocodile or hippopotamus, and to symbolize Egypt. But *v.* 31 represents the princes or ambassadors of Egypt as bringing gifts: and it is not likely that in two consecutive verses Egypt should be described as a beast requiring rebuke, and then by its own name offering gifts. *The multitude of the bulls* is commonly interpreted of "princes," and *calves of the people*, Hebr. *peoples*, as the "subject-soldiery" or "masses." All this is mere conjecture. The general meaning, as above, is plain. "Threaten all such peoples with vengeance, unless each submits with offerings of silver." According to the above rendering, the mood suddenly changes from the imperative to the past or present. So the threat is described as accomplishing its purpose. "Each submits humbly with pieces of silver; He has scattered the people who delight in war." The grammar can only be explained on the supposition that the expressions are abrupt, allusive, perhaps fragmentary, rather than descriptive and full.

32. *Sing unto God*, &c.] Conclusion of the whole. "Let all nations sing Thy praise, O God, Who hast done such wonders, and still art doing." The import of *Selah* mentioned above, *vv.* 7, 19, accords with this place; the musical pitch is raised as *v.* 33 is sung; and possibly the voice of Jehovah Himself in thunder is heard at the words, "Lo! He doth send out His voice. 'Tis a voice of might!"

33. *heavens of heavens*] *i.e.* the highest heavens (Deut. x. 14; 1 K. viii. 27), which were of old before the creation of the heavens (Gen. i. 1) which encompass the earth.

34. *Ascribe*, &c.] "Confess the might and majesty of God seen in Israel's history, to be seen in its coming history, and reaching to heaven and earth."

35. *out of thy holy places*, &c.] "Terrible art Thou on account of the demonstrations of Thy power which Thou sendest forth out of Thy holy places." See *v.* 28; Ps. xx. 2. The plural seems a poetical license, as in Pss. lxxxiv. 1, cxxxii. 5, 7, &c. (Hebr.).

his people] Heb. the people.

The faith and hope expressed briefly, but with intense earnestness, in the latter verses of this psalm, and the confident assurance of Jehovah's future reign in Zion over all lands (though its manner of accomplishment is not stated), seem as remarkable as the fire and brilliancy of the early portion of it. As a whole the psalm cannot be considered as referring to Christ's kingdom; but the application to Him in the New Testament of *vv.* 17, 18, and the natural application to His kingdom of the latter verses, compel us to regard it as in a sense, though not the most direct, Messianic; requiring Christ and His day for its complete elucidation. Such a view of the psalm, compared with the exulting Christian meditations upon it, of Bishop Horne, and of the author of the 'Plain Commentary' (to instance only two authors), must needs appear cold and shallow to some. But the object of this Commentary is to expound the text as it was read in earliest times. To apply it to Christian times, and add to it Christian *meditations*, is not hard, but is foreign to the purpose; and interferes with the exhibition of an original majestic Scripture in its simplicity and intense instructiveness to those for whom it was composed.

NOTES on PSALM LXVIII.

1. The psalm appended 1 Chro. xvi. 7—36 (see the note there), though added to in subsequent times, probably contains the original psalm put into the hands of Asaph, &c.

2. The word שְׁפָתַיִם, and the similar word מִשְׁפְּתַיִם (Gen. xlix. 14; Judg. v. 16; see the notes at those places), are generally rendered stalls, pens, or folds; the former, in the text, *pots*. To lie among the folds would seem to mean, to lead a peaceful country life at ease.

A very clear and excellent summary of the various interpretations of this place may be found in Perowne, 'Book of Psalms,' l.c.

3. The Hebrew word שַׁנְאָן occurs only here: it means in all probability "repetition," from שנה. The LXX. render χιλιάδες εὐθηνούντων, deriving the word from שָׁאַן, as if it were שְׁאָנָן. The Vulg. renders "millia lætantium." The Targum says, "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, blazing with flame, led by 2000 angels," &c. Hence, perhaps, the interpretation and rendering of the A.V.

4. The translation of the Prayer-Book Version comes apparently from the LXX. and Vulg., which render respectively ὅπως ἂν βαφῇ ὁ ποῦς σου ἐν αἵματι, ἡ γλῶττα τῶν κυνῶν σου ἐξ ἐχθρῶν παρ' αὐτοῦ; and, ut intingatur pes tuus in sanguine, lingua canum tuorum ex inimicis ab ipso. Instead of תִּמְחַץ, they read תחמין. The confusion may easily have arisen from *v.* 21. If any emendation of the text is to be admitted, the reading תִּרְחַץ (Ps. lviii. 10) is natural. One of Kenn. MSS. seems to favour this reading.

PSALM LXIX.

1 *David complaineth of his affliction.* 13 *He prayeth for deliverance.* 22 *He devoteth his enemies to destruction.* 30 *He praiseth God with thanksgiving.*

To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, *A Psalm* of David.

SAVE me, O God; for the waters are come in unto *my* soul.

2 I sink in †deep mire, where *there* *is* no standing: I am come into †deep waters, where the floods overflow me.

3 I am weary of my crying: my

† Heb. *the mire of depth.*

† Heb. *depth of waters.*

PSALM LXIX.

The circumstances under which this psalm was composed, and the character of the writer, are intimated with more than usual distinctness. The Psalmist was in deep affliction, in danger of perishing, exhausted by mourning, surrounded by bitter enemies, an object of contumely, insult, and wrong; he is cast into a pit, in deep waters, at the point of death: his food is mingled with gall, his drink is vinegar. On the other hand, though deeply conscious of sin, he is yet certain that his sufferings are directly owing to his devotion to God, to his zeal for His house, and that he bears reproaches aimed at God; he is sure of God's love and favour, and has but one wish, to see His face. He speaks of others as sharing his trouble as the Lord's prisoner, and expresses a sure hope that God will save Zion and build the cities of Judah, and that the seed of the righteous will inherit and dwell in the land.

The psalm is attributed to David in the inscription, and it bears so close a resemblance to Pss. xx., xxxv., xl., xliv., and li., that even Köster admits they may have been composed by one writer. The coincidences with Jeremiah's history are so numerous and striking that many critics are disposed to believe that he was the author (see however notes on *vv.* 1 and 2); others believe that it was written in the period of the captivity: but such conjectures rest on no solid basis, and are advanced and rejected with equal facility. If the inscription be admitted—and there is no sufficient reason for rejecting it—it must be supposed that David wrote the psalm either immediately before, or during his exile from Jerusalem, and that under the controlling influence of the Spirit of God his utterances were so modified as to find their true and complete fulfilment in the person of Christ, of Whom he was a type. The very numerous references to the psalm in the New Testament leave no doubt as to its general acceptance as a Messianic psalm in the time of our Lord: some of them distinctly attribute it to David, all assume its prophetic or typical significance. The imprecations upon the fierce and malignant enemies of God's persecuted servant bear the character of prediction, nor can their fulfilment be denied. The devout reader, who sees throughout a portraiture of Christ, under the veil of an imperfect but really typical representative, attains in all probability most nearly to the true meaning of the psalm.

The metrical system is highly artistic, a fact nearly conclusive against the supposition of a late date; it consists of five strophes responding to each other in reverse order, with 4, 8, 9, 8, 4 verses severally: with a liturgical close, verses 35, 36.

A Psalm of David] It is ascribed to David by St Paul, Rom. xi. 9.

1. *the waters are come in*] This expression appears to be metaphorical; it occurs in

throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God.

4 They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, *being* mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored *that* which I took not away.

5 O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my †sins are not hid from thee.

† Heb. guiltiness.

6 Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord GOD of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel.

7 Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face.

8 I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children.

9 [a]For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; [b]and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.

[a] John 2. 17. [b] Rom. 15. 3.

10 When I wept, *and chastened* my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach.

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other psalms, especially in those attributed by all critics to David. Cf. Pss. xviii. 4, xlii. 7, lxxxviii. 7, 17; see also Job xxii. 11 and xxvii. 20. It is supposed by some to refer to Jeremiah's being let down into a pit, or cistern, but we are expressly told that there was no water in that.

2. *deep waters*] The two figures in this verse taken together are irreconcileable with the reference to Jeremiah: they give a most lively and forcible representation of David (see Ps. xl. 2), and of Him Whom David prefigured, in the hour of His desolation.

3. *mine eyes fail*] Cf. Deut. xxviii. 32.

wait for my God] See note on Job xiii. 15.

4. *They that hate me without a cause*] See John xv. 25. The quotation of these words by our Lord proves that they are applicable to the Messiah. David might say of some (as in Ps. xxxv. 19), but certainly not of all his enemies, that they hated him without cause.

then I restored] Dr Kay refers to the accusation of Shimei, 2 S. xvi. 8. David had not seized the throne, as was then asserted.

5. *O God, thou knowest my foolishness*] It is remarkable that in appealing to God the Psalmist does not, as elsewhere, assert his innocence, but simply confesses his foolishness and guilt. This is quite intelligible in the case of David, who always distinguishes carefully between his position in relation to God and to his subjects: it is far less suitable to Jeremiah, who owns no expressions corresponding to this.

my sins] This leaves no doubt as to the personal character of the psalm. The Psalmist goes to the depth of his own consciousness. Though blameless in his relations to his persecutors he knows that what occurs is the result and punishment of sin.

sins] The Hebrew word denotes "guilt:" hence in the marg. "guiltiness;" but the original is plural, and the Psalmist refers to certain acts by which he had contracted guilt. LXX. πλημμέλειαι: Vulg. delicta. It is better to retain the A. V.

6. *be ashamed*] As they would be if one were utterly forsaken, whose sin had been pardoned, and whose repentance had been sealed by devotion to God's service. Such a prayer implies, and is the expression of, a sure hope: its tone is confident. The Psalmist appeals to God's power as the God of hosts, to His covenanted relations as the God of Israel: there is a world of promise in the combination of the two names.

7. *for thy sake*] The Psalmist in this and in the following verses attributes his sufferings directly to his zeal in God's service. This is one of the reasons why the psalm is attributed to Jeremiah, to whom such expressions are undoubtedly applicable (see ch. xv. 15): but they are true of God's servants in all times; David may have felt that the real secret of the enmity which he encountered, whatever the pretext might be, was hatred of the justice and religion which he upheld. In the highest sense the statement is absolutely applicable to the Messiah.

8. *I am become a stranger*] Cited twice by St John, i. 11 and vii. 5. Cf. Ps. xxxi. 11; Isai. liii. 3, and Job xix. 13.

9. *the zeal of thine house*] Or, "jealousy for thine house:" cf. 2 K. x. 16. This evidently points to a special and extraordinary instance, or habit, of zeal, such as was shewn by David and the best of his successors. See Ps. cxxxii. 1—5, and cf. cxix. 139. It might of course be said by Jeremiah or any of the prophets, but with far less propriety than by David. It can only be applied by a very forced construction to a prophet writing in the captivity, when the temple did not exist. The application to our Lord is made by St John, ii. 17.

the reproaches] See Rom. xv. 3.

10—12. The feelings here described are quite in harmony with those which breathe

11 I made sackcloth also my garment; and I became a proverb to them.

12 They that sit in the gate speak against me; and I *was* the song of the †drunkards.

† Heb. *drinkers of strong drink.*

13 But as for me, my prayer *is* unto thee, O LORD, *in* an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation.

14 Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink: let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters.

15 Let not the waterflood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me.

16 Hear me, O LORD; for thy lovingkindness *is* good: turn unto me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies.

17 And hide not thy face from thy servant; for I am in trouble: †hear me speedily.

† Heb. *make haste to hear me.*

18 Draw nigh unto my soul, *and* redeem it: deliver me because of mine enemies.

19 Thou hast known my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonour: mine adversaries *are* all before thee.

20 Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked *for some* †to take pity, but *there was* none; and for comforters, but I found none.

† Heb. *to lament with me.*

21 They gave me also gall for my meat; [c]and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

[c] Matth. 27. 34, 48. Mark 15 23. John 19. 29.

22 [d]Let their table become a snare before them: and *that which should*

[d] Rom. 11. 9, 10.

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in psalms composed during the period of extreme depression and suffering, mental and bodily, which immediately preceded the outburst of Absalom's rebellion. One point, however, stands out here more prominently, the consciousness that the Psalmist was hated above all things because of his devotion to God's service. Cf. Ps. xxxv. 13, 16; Job xvii. 6, xxx. 9. This portion of the psalm has no direct bearing upon our Lord's life. No such external demonstrations of sorrow, no fasting, no sackcloth, gave occasion to revilings in His case; on the contrary, He was reproached for neglecting them.

12. *sit in the gate*] *i. e.* even the magistrates and rulers; see note on Job v. 4, xxix. 7, and Ps. ix. 15. Cf. also Mark xv. 31.

song] Thus Job xxx. 9.

drunkards] Or, drinkers of strong wine.

13. *acceptable time*] See Ps. xxxii. 6; Isai. xlix. 8, lv. 6; 2 Cor. vi. 2.

14. The same metaphors as in *vv.* 1, 2: evidently representing the perilous condition of the Psalmist under different, and, if they were taken literally, incongruous, figures. The application to Jeremiah is therefore groundless.

18—21. In these verses the Psalmist describes his condition in terms which belong so completely to Him Whom he represented, as to obscure their primary application. They are but partially applicable to David, who was never abandoned by all his friends, or to Jeremiah, who found pity and warm sympathy even among the princes, or even to any prophet under the captivity, who found true and faithful comforters among their countrymen. The last special circumstances could only be figuratively true of any save Christ in the hour of His Passion.

19. *my reproach*] Ps. xxii. 6. Cf. Matt. xxvii. 29.

20. *I am full of heaviness*] The Hebrew expresses "deadly faintness." Cf. Matt. xxvi. 37, 38.

21. Literally, "They gave, or put, gall in my food." The word rendered gall includes all poisonous, or even very bitter ingredients; hence the fitness of the application to the wine mingled with gall (or myrrh) which our Saviour tasted, but would not drink. See notes on Matt. xxvii. 34; Joh. xix. 29.

22—28. Regarding these imprecations as simple outpourings of bitter indignation, they belong to the spirit of the Old Testament, which breathes of judgment rather than of mercy: regarding them as predictions, there can be no doubt of their fulfilment. In either case they are to be looked upon not as utterances of Him Whom the Psalmist prefigured, but of a human soul wrought almost to madness by the triumph of cruelty and crime.

22. *their table*] As they administered "gall" and "vinegar," see *v.* 21, so must they in turn know the bitterness of frustrated desires. The table is an emblem of prosperity; see xxiii. 5.

and that which should, &c.] Or, **and a trap to them in their security**; *i.e.* while they are at ease, in a state of perfect security, let sudden destruction come on them; just as they injured him who was at peace with them. The A. V. follows Calvin, who

have been for *their* welfare, *let it become* a trap.

23 Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake.

24 Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them.

† Heb. *their palace.* † Heb. *let there not be a dweller.*

25 Let †their habitation be desolate; *and* †let none dwell in their tents.

26 For they persecute *him* whom thou hast smitten; and they talk to the grief of †those whom thou hast wounded. † Heb. *thy wounded.*

27 Add ‖iniquity unto their iniquity: and let them not come into thy righteousness. ‖ Or, *punishment of iniquity.*

28 Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.

29 But I *am* poor and sorrowful: let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high.

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renders the passage "quæ ad pacem sunt (pacifica eorum), Deus convertat in exitium." This gives a good sense, and harmonizes with the original, but is too paraphrastic for a translation. The mind reverts naturally to the ruin brought upon our Lord's countrymen by their adherence to rites from which all life had departed.

a trap] As a wild beast grasps at food, and falls into a snare.

23. *their eyes be darkened*] In retribution for their malignant joy in gazing upon the sorrows of the righteous: thus too the trembling of the loins (cf. Dan. v. 6, Nah. ii. 10) punishes the abuse of strength. The expression "darkening of the eyes," however, is equivalent to darkening of the understanding in many passages. See Isai. vi. 10, and the quotations Matt. xiii. 14; John xii. 39, 40; Rom. xi. 8; 2 Cor. iii. 14.

25. *their habitation*] The Hebrew word signifies specially the circular enclosure in which shepherds or nomadic tribes kept their cattle. This applies better to David's time than either to that of Jeremiah, when the open country was occupied by the Assyrians, or to that of the captivity in Babylon. The application to Judas by St Peter (Acts i. 20) proceeds on the general principle that all curses of the Old Testament come in their fulness upon those in whom wickedness reached its culminating point; or it may be because Ahithophel, against whom this imprecation, if uttered by David, was probably directed, was a type of the betrayer of the Son of David.

26. These curses are strictly and exactly retributive, and as such inevitable consequences of divine justice. The wicked are to suffer above all things for their unpitying cruelty. It is observable that sufferings which are inflicted by God, and indications of His displeasure, are here represented by the Psalmist as calling for compassion and tender sympathy on the part of man. Thus 2 Chro. xxviii. 9; Job xix. 21; Isai. liii. 4.

talk to the grief] Or, "tell of the grief;" they dwell upon every detail, recount the marks of God's anger with malignant curiosity; cf. Ps. xli. 5—8. This passage again is far more suitable to David than to Jeremiah, who was smitten by the enemies of God, and bore no traces of divine displeasure.

27. *Add iniquity unto their iniquity*] This rendering is perfectly correct, and preferable to that suggested in the margin of our A.V., viz. punishment of iniquity. The Psalmist refers to the record of sins in God's book, which is not to be blotted out, but to be accumulated unto the day of judgment. This of course assumes their persistence in evil.

come into thy righteousness] The expression is somewhat peculiar. To come into God's righteousness is to be a partaker of it, whether by communication or imputation; to be an object of sanctifying or justifying grace. In this passage the latter effect is undoubtedly that which the Psalmist contemplates. He does not pray that they should remain in a state of unconversion, not becoming righteous, but that being unconverted they should not be dealt with as righteous, suffered to prosper and to escape punishment.

28. *book of the living*] See Exod. xxxii. 32, and compare Isai. iv. 3; Dan. xii. 1; Phil. iv. 3. The "book of the living" includes all who are preserved in this life by the divine goodness, who not only live, but are deemed worthy to live. The figure may be taken from the register in which the names of all citizens were enrolled. See Ezek. xiii. 9.

with the righteous] This clause proves that the book of the living does not include the names of those who are not the objects of God's love. Cf. Ps. lxxxvii. 6; Ezek. xiii. 9, and Luke x. 20, "Your names are written in heaven."

29. *But I*, &c.] This verse describes the actual condition and certain hope of the Psalmist in contrast to his enemies. They are proud and prosperous but will be brought low, he is lowly and afflicted but will be exalted.

30 I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving.

31 *This* also shall please the LORD better than an ox *or* bullock that hath horns and hoofs.

‖ Or, *meek.* 32 The ‖humble shall see *this*, *and* be glad: and your heart shall live that seek God.

33 For the LORD heareth the poor, and despiseth not his prisoners.

34 Let the heaven and earth praise him, the seas, and every thing that † Heb. *creepeth.* †moveth therein.

35 For God will save Zion, and will build the cities of Judah: that they may dwell there, and have it in possession.

36 The seed also of his servants shall inherit it: and they that love his name shall dwell therein.

PSALM LXX.

David soliciteth God to the speedy destruction of the wicked, and preservation of the godly.

To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of David, to bring to remembrance.

MAKE haste, [a] O God, to deliver me; make haste [†] to help me, O LORD. [a] Ps. 40. 13, &c. [†] Heb. *to my help.*

2 [b] Let them be ashamed and confounded that seek after my soul: let them be turned backward, and put to confusion, that desire my hurt. [b] Ps. 35. 4. & 71. 13.

3 Let them be turned back for a reward of their shame that say, Aha, aha.

4 Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: and let such as love thy salvation say continually, Let God be magnified.

5 But I *am* poor and needy: make haste unto me, O God: thou *art* my help and my deliverer; O LORD, make no tarrying.

PSALM LXXI.

David, in confidence of faith, and experience of God's favour, prayeth both for himself, and against the enemies of his soul. 14 *He promiseth constancy.* 17 *He prayeth for perseverance.* 19 *He praiseth God, and promiseth to do it cheerfully.*

IN [a] thee, O LORD, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion. [a] Ps. 31. 1.

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30. *magnify him with thanksgiving*] Cf. Ps. l. 14.

31. Or, **And it shall please the Lord better than an ox, a bullock that hath horns and hoofs.** The horns mark the age of the bullock, not under three years, the hoofs its ceremonial cleanness, thus together representing the most perfect offering ordained by the law; cf. Lev. xi. 3.

32. The verse may be rendered, **The humble have seen it, and they will rejoice; let your heart live, ye who seek the Lord.** Cf. Ps. xxii. 26.

33. *his prisoners*] Those who suffer imprisonment, or generally, oppression and persecution for His sake. This expression, though suitable to Jeremiah, is too general to affect the question of authorship. Cf. Ps. lxviii. 6.

35. *will save Zion*] The natural inference from this verse is that Zion is in danger, and that the cities of Judah are destroyed: a combination which points to the time of Jeremiah, yet is unsuitable in the mouth of that prophet, who, at the very time when he is supposed to have written this psalm, foretold the destruction of Zion. On the other hand, the wish that God may build the cities of Judah, complete and secure them, and grant them for a permanent possession to His people, is one which befits a patriotic king, and may without incongruity be assigned to David. Cf. note on Ps. li. 18.

PSALM LXX.

This is taken with little variation from Ps. xl., 13th and following verses. The name Elohim is substituted in most places, but not throughout, for Jehovah. The inscription describes it as a psalm "to bring to remembrance," from which it may perhaps be inferred that it was used by the Psalmist when he brought a legal meat-offering to the altar. It is quite uncertain whether this psalm was separated from the context and arranged for liturgical use by David, or by a later composer.

PSALM LXXI.

This psalm has no inscription, but in the Septuagint version it has the title, "A psalm of David, of the sons of Jonadab, and of those who were first led captive." This probably means that it was composed by David, but used as especially suitable to their own condition by the Rechabites, and by the Jews of the captivity. It is full of reminiscences, or direct quotations of other psalms, especially the 22nd, 35th, and 40th, and is supposed to have been a compilation by a later writer. The date and authorship are wholly uncertain. It consists of two parts. In the first (1—11), the author prays for deliverance, and describes

2 Deliver me in thy righteousness, and cause me to escape: incline thine ear unto me, and save me.

† Heb. *Be thou to me for a rock of habitation.*

3 †Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: thou hast given commandment to save me; for thou *art* my rock and my fortress.

4 Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man.

5 For thou *art* my hope, O Lord GOD: *thou art* my trust from my youth.

6 By thee have I been holden up from the womb: thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels: my praise *shall be* continually of thee.

7 I am as a wonder unto many; but thou *art* my strong refuge.

8 Let my mouth be filled *with* thy praise *and with* thy honour all the day.

9 Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth.

10 For mine enemies speak against me; and they that †lay wait for my soul take counsel together,

† Heb. *watch, or, observe.*

11 Saying, God hath forsaken him: persecute and take him; for *there is* none to deliver *him.*

12 O God, be not far from me: O my God, make haste for my help.

13 Let them be confounded *and* consumed that are adversaries to my soul; let them be covered *with* reproach and dishonour that seek my hurt.

14 But I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more.

15 My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness *and* thy salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers *thereof.*

16 I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD: I will make mention of thy righteousness, *even* of thine only.

17 O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works.

18 Now also †when I am old and greyheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed †thy strength unto *this* generation, *and* thy power to every one *that* is to come.

† Heb. *unto old age and grey hairs.* † Heb. *thine arm.*

19 Thy righteousness also, O God, *is* very high, who hast done great

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his sufferings and his hopes grounded on past mercies; in the second (12—24), he promises thanksgiving and praise for the triumph over his enemies which he confidently anticipates as the result of his prayers.

1—3. Compare these verses with the commencement of Ps. xxxi., 1—3.

3. *my strong habitation*] Or, as marg., **a rock of habitation**, *i.e.* a stronghold on a rock. The figure is common in the Davidic psalms. Cf. Deut. xxxiii. 27.

5. *my hope*] Compare Jer. xiv. 8, xvii. 13, l. 7, and 1 Tim. i. 1; Col. i. 27.

6. *have I been holden up*] Compare Ps. xxii. 10. There the Psalmist represents himself as cast upon God, here as sustained by Him from first to last.

out of my mother's bowels] Ps. xxii. 9.

7. *a wonder*] An object of marvel, a portent, as some suppose, because he had been marvellously protected and delivered; but as others, more in accordance with the context, explain the word, a marvellous example of God's punishments. Thus Job was looked upon by his friends. See also Isai. viii. 18; Zech. iii. 8.

9. *of old age*] This leaves no doubt that the Psalmist was growing old. See too *v.* 18. The latter years of David's life were prosperous, but visited by an affliction severe enough to give occasion to these lamentations: see 2 S. xxiv.

12, 13. These verses are apparently adaptations from other psalms, sc. xxii., xxxv., xxxviii. and lx.

15. *thy righteousness*] The attribute on which all hope of salvation depends. God's righteousness is the pledge not only of His accepting the righteous, but of His adherence to His promises of mercy and forgiveness to penitents.

16. *of thine only*] As the only ground of justification.

18. *when I am old and greyheaded*] Or, **near to old age and grey hairs.** The Psalmist is on the verge of old age, but not yet arrived at it.

things: O God, who *is* like unto thee!

20 *Thou*, which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth.

21 Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side.

† Heb. *with the instrument of psaltery.*

22 I will also praise thee †with the psaltery, *even* thy truth, O my God: unto thee will I sing with the harp, O thou Holy One of Israel.

23 My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee; and my soul, which thou hast redeemed.

24 My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long: for they are confounded, for they are brought unto shame, that seek my hurt.

PSALM LXXII.

1 *David, praying for Solomon, sheweth the goodness and glory of his, in type, and in truth, of Christ's kingdom.* 18 *He blesseth God.*

A Psalm ‖for Solomon. ‖ Or, *of.*

GIVE the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son.

2 He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment.

3 The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness.

4 He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor.

5 They shall fear thee as long as

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thy strength] Or, "Thy arm," the manifestation or putting forth of the divine power.

19. *who is like unto thee!*] The motto of the Maccabees. Compare also Ps. lxxxix. 6, 8.

22. *with the psaltery*] Literally, "with an instrument of a lute," a periphrasis which may perhaps indicate a later age than David's.

Holy One of Israel] A name of God very often used by Isaiah, but which occurs twice only in the psalms. Jeremiah also uses it twice.

Psalm LXXII.

This psalm is attributed in the inscription to Solomon; and it bears strong indications of his authorship: the style resembles that of the Proverbs, and is different from the Davidic psalms: the allusions to distant lands, to an extended and peaceful dominion, and a certain air of calm and cheerful reflection, are characteristic of the son of David. It was probably composed early in the king's reign for liturgical recitation, a form in which the people might give expression to loyal and devout aspirations, connected with the head of the Theocratic kingdom. Hence the Messianic tone which pervades the whole: the author felt himself to be the representative of the ideal and future Messiah; his prayers and hopes reach far beyond his own sphere; they are fulfilled only in Christ. This psalm is thus the culminating point of that portion of Messianic prophecy which sets forth the kingly office of the Saviour. The Hebrews of Solomon's age may possibly not have distinguished between the type and the antitype, and may have expected a realization of the old national hopes in the person of one so richly gifted as their young, beautiful, wise, and prosperous king: but the Psalmist's spirit was under the control of a Power, which prompted utterances, in which the Church of all ages has found announcements of Christ.

for Solomon] Or, "of Solomon," literally, "to Solomon;" precisely the same form is used here as in the inscriptions of psalms assigned to David. It marks authorship. See Ps. xlvi., inscription.

1. *the king*] The Targum, representing the old Hebrew tradition, renders this "the King Messiah."

thy righteousness] The righteousness, which belongs to the kingly office, is thus represented as a communication of the divine attribute. The Psalmist sees in the king's son the recipient and channel of all righteousness; hence the application to Christ.

the king's son] Solomon naturally lays stress on this point: the promises made to David had special reference to his son.

2. *He shall judge*, &c.] Cf. Isai. xi. 3, 4, xxxii. 1.

3. The mountains and hills represent the whole land, of which they are the most prominent objects. The whole country will overflow with the peace which is the result of righteousness.

4. Compare Job xxix. 12—17; Isai. xi. 4.

children of the needy] Cf. δυστήνων παῖδες, 'Il.' Φ. 151, a common idiom in Hebrew and Hellenistic Greek; see Cremer, 'Biblische Gräcität,' s. v. *υἱός*.

5. *fear thee*] Thee, that is, God. True religion will be the great and permanent result of righteous government.

the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations.

6 He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers *that* water the earth.

7 In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace †so long as the moon endureth.

† Heb. *till* there be *no moon.*

8 He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.

9 They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust.

10 The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.

11 Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.

12 For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and *him* that hath no helper.

13 He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy.

14 He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight.

15 And he shall live, and to him † Heb. one *shall give.* †shall be given of the gold of Sheba:

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as long, &c.] Literally, "with the sun and before the moon," but our A.V. gives the true sense. Cf. Luke i. 33.

6. *like rain*] Solomon undoubtedly refers to, and adopts, his father's description of the righteous ruler. See 2 S. xxiii. 4. Compare Hos. vi. 3.

mown grass] This is undoubtedly correct; cf. Amos vii. 1; the Prayer-book, "fleece," follows the old versions.

7. *so long as the moon endureth*] Lit. as in marg. **till the moon be no more.** Cf. Job xiv. 12. This passage is important as shewing that the idea of a King whose reign should last to the end of time was distinctly present to the Psalmist's mind. It determines the Messianic character of the whole composition. Cf. Isai. ii. 4.

8. The kingdom was to be universal, extending to the ends of the earth. The extension of the Israelitish realm under David and Solomon was sufficient to suggest the hope, and might be regarded by the Psalmist as a pledge of its realization, but taken in connection with the preceding verses this declaration is strictly Messianic.

from the river] *i.e.* the Euphrates. The sovereignty of Solomon over tributary peoples extended to the Euphrates; but that limit was but the commencement of the dominion which the ideal King would exercise over the whole world. Cf. Ps. ii. 8, cx. 2.

10. Tarshish and the isles represent the west, of which vague but impressive accounts were brought to Palestine by the Phœnicians, whose commerce at that time extended to the south-west of England. Sheba, in Arabia, and Seba (*i.e.* Meroe, according to Josephus, 'Antt.' II. x. 2), represent the nations of Asia and Africa. Cf. 1 K. x. 1, and note on Gen. x. 7.

offer gifts] Not merely in token of friendship, but of subjection: all powers of the earth will be tributary to the King.

12. *For*] The connection of thought is observable. The extension of the King's dominion is the result not of military force, but of moral influence; all nations will be won by the righteousness of His sway, more especially by His care for the poor and afflicted. See Drechsler on Isai. ix. 7. This is important as shewing how completely Jewish anticipations of the Messianic epoch are opposed to the plain statements of Hebrew prophecy.

when he crieth] sc. for help. Job xxix. 12, where both clauses occur.

the poor also, and him] Or, **and the poor who hath no helper.** Thus LXX., Vulg., and Jerome. Job l. c. has "the orphan, who hath no helper."

13. *the poor and needy*] Or, **the weak and needy.**

14. *deceit*] Ps. xxxvi. 3; here fraud and extortion are specially meant.

precious shall their blood, &c.] 1 S. xxvi. 21; 2 K. i. 13. As King He will be merciful and just; as Saviour He will redeem them with His own precious blood.

15. *he shall live*] It is questioned who is the subject of this and the following clauses. The words rendered literally are, "And he shall live, and he shall give to Him of the gold of Saba, and he shall pray for Him continually, and shall bless Him every day." On the whole it seems most natural to take the man who has been delivered by the righteousness of the King as the subject of the sentence. His life is saved, and in grateful acknowledgment he brings costly gifts "of the gold of Sheba," prays for the King's prosperity, and blesses His name unceasingly. To

prayer also shall be made for him continually; *and* daily shall he be praised.

16 There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and *they* of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.

17 His name †shall endure for ever: †his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and *men* shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.

18 Blessed *be* the LORD God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things.

19 And blessed *be* his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled *with* his glory; Amen, and Amen.

20 The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.

† Heb. *shall be.*
† Heb. *shall be as a son to continue his father's name for ever.*

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this explanation, which Hupfeld holds to be the only one grammatically admissible, there is the obvious objection that the "poor man" would not offer gold of Sheba; rich offerings, however, would naturally be made by subjects saved from oppression. Dr Kay renders, "and He shall live: and one shall give to Him of Sheba's gold; and He shall make intercession continually for him, all day long shall he bless Him." But though it is quite possible that different subjects may be supplied for the separate clauses, the changes in this rendering appear somewhat abrupt.

16. *There shall be*, &c.] **Or, May there be abundance of corn in the land, on the top of mountains.** "Handful" in the A.V. follows a Hebrew tradition; but the meaning "abundance" given by the Syriac, and supported by Heb., Chald., and Arabic usage, is accepted by modern critics, and is better adapted to the context. The LXX. *στήριγμα* is not easily accounted for. Symm. *ἴχνος τροφῆς.*

mountains] See *v.* 3. There are traces of cultivation extending up the terraced sides to the summit of the mountains of Palestine—a well-known evidence of former prosperity. Cf. 2 S. i. 21.

the fruit thereof] The ripened corn on the heights will rustle in the wind like the foliage on Lebanon. "Shake" or "rustle" is preferable to "wave;" the word denotes movement and sound.

like grass] A different word meaning grass is used *v.* 6; the Hebrew word in this passage includes all herbs. Cf. Job v. 25. On the rapid increase of a regenerate people in Messianic times, see Ps. cx. 3; Isai. ix. 3, xlix. 20.

17. *His name shall endure*] Or, "May His name be for ever." This is at once a prayer and a prophecy. Cf. Ps. lxxxi. 15, lxxxix. 36.

his name] Or, "may His name be renewed so long as the sun shineth." The Hebrew word for "renewed" occurs only in this passage, but the meaning is not disputed: His name will produce a new progeny, will be continued by every renewed race. See Note below.

and men shall be blessed] Cf. Gen. xxii. 18, xxvi. 4. Lit. shall bless themselves. This implies a consciousness and recognition of the blessing. It is more, as Dr Kay observes, than "be blessed," in Gen. xii. 3, xxvi. 4.

all nations] Luke i. 48.

18, 19. See Ps. xli. 13.

18. *who only doeth wondrous things*] See Job v. 9.

20. This verse marks the close of the collection, which contains at least sixty psalms ascribed to David, and probably bore as a formal designation, "The Prayers of David." In the next book one psalm only is assigned to David. The title David the son of Jesse recalls the last words of David, 2 S. xxiii. 1; it was evidently here, as in that passage, assumed by the king himself, both in memory of his comparatively humble origin, and of the meaning of the name Jesse, or Yishai.

NOTE on PSALM LXXII. 17.

N.B. The Cethib (יִנּוֹן, yanin) is preferable to the Keri (יִנּוֹן, yinnon). It is noticeable that the Rabbins took "Yinnon" to be a proper name. "Why shall Messiah be called Yinnon? Because He shall raise those who sleep in the earth," see 'Midrash Mishle,' f. 53, 3, quoted by Sepp, 'Leben Jesu,' Vol. VI. p. 517. They rightly apprehended the meaning of regeneration involved in the word, applying it, however, not to the creation of a new people, but to the resurrection, which our Lord calls "the regeneration," *παλιγγενεσία*, Matt. xix. 28.

PSALM LXXIII.

1 *The prophet, prevailing in a temptation,* 2 *sheweth the occasion thereof, the prosperity of the wicked.* 13 *The wound given thereby, diffidence.* 15 *The victory over it, knowledge of God's purpose, in destroying of the wicked, and sustaining the righteous.*

‖ A Psalm of Asaph.

‖ Or, *A Psalm for Asaph.*

TRULY God *is* good to Israel, *even* to such as are † Or, *Yet.* † Heb. *clean of heart.* of a clean heart.

2 But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped.

3 [a] For I was envious at the foolish, *when* I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

[a] Job 21. 7. Ps. 37. 1. Jer. 12. 1.

4 For *there are* no bands in their death: but their strength *is* † firm.

† Heb. *fat.*

5 They *are* not † in trouble *as other* men; neither are they plagued † like *other* men.

† Heb. *in the trouble of* other *men.* † Heb. *with.*

THIRD BOOK. PSALMS LXXIII.—LXXXIX.

The psalms in this book differ in some important points from the preceding. Eleven are attributed to Asaph, four to the sons of Korah, one to Ethan, and one only to David. Their character is for the most part didactic, grave, solemn, and sententious. They are pervaded by a deep feeling of melancholy, relieved however by flashes of spiritual hope; containing at once the most harrowing descriptions of national calamities, and the clearest anticipations of a futurity of blessedness. It is observable that from the forty-second to the eighty-fourth psalms the name Elohim is used almost exclusively. This is conclusive against the assumption that such an usage indicates an early date, for these psalms, with very few exceptions, belong to the post-Davidic period, and are even assigned in part by some critics to a far later age.

PSALM LXXIII.

This psalm may have been composed by Asaph, the contemporary of David, but the name appears to have been borne by some of his descendants. The indications of date are uncertain. The progress or triumph of ungodliness is a feature common to every age, nor are the complaints stronger than those found in the psalms of David. The apostasy of which the Psalmist speaks is rather moral than ceremonial; the unbelief rather of practical atheism than of heathenish superstition. The sanctuary is still standing (17), the Psalmist goes there for instruction and comfort. The belief in a future retribution is definite (24), not like that of Job, a strong aspiration, or even subjective conviction, but based on the divine promise. The language is archaic, and the style somewhat obscure, resembling to some extent the book of Job, with which the author was evidently familiar. Upon the whole it appears most probable that we have here a product of the Solomonian age, written at a season when a turbulent and corrupt nobility had the upper hand, and vicious habits were taking deep root in the nation. A few years before the death of Solomon, or the period immediately following the accession of his son, would supply abundant materials for such reflections.

A Psalm of Asaph] Literally, "to or for Asaph," as in the margin; but the word generally denotes authorship. See note on title of Ps. lxxii.

1. *Truly*] Or, **Verily**, as in *v.* 13. The word so rendered indicates the result of a mental struggle, it speaks of doubts satisfied, and obstinate questionings silenced. Dr Kay has "only;" but scarcely in accordance with English usage.

even to such as are of a clean heart] Or, **to the pure in heart**. Thus our Lord, "blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." God reveals His goodness on this condition. Sin is the mist which intercepts the light and warmth of His presence. Cf. Ps. xxiv. 4.

2. *well nigh*] An admirable description of the effects of evil influence. The Psalmist is like a man standing on slippery ground, and scarcely able to retain his footing against a rushing stream: all but borne along by the current of popular opinion.

3. *envious*] The cardinal temptation. Cf. Job xxi. 7, where the feeling is brought out with its results.

the foolish] The word implies empty boasting, fools exulting in their impiety. See note on Ps. v. 5. Dr Kay has "boastful."

the prosperity] Literally, "the peace." The great trial was to see the boastfulness of the wicked apparently justified by their security and success.

4. *no bands*] This is generally understood to mean, the wicked go through no severe struggles, mental or bodily, in their death; they die easily, without fear or pain. Thus Job xxi. 13, "they spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave," and *v.* 23, "in full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet." The word occurs elsewhere only in Isai. lviii. 6. This indeed is the natural and obvious sense; but late commentators (Delitzsch, Hupfeld, &c.) object that the Psalmist would hardly begin with the death of the wicked, and they therefore suggest other renderings, such as, the wicked have no pains or affliction until their death, or not such as cause death: the objection, however, seems to

6 Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them *as* a garment.

7 Their eyes stand out with fatness: †they have more than heart could wish.

† Heb. *they pass the thoughts of the heart.*

8 They are corrupt, and speak wickedly *concerning* oppression: they speak loftily.

9 They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth.

10 Therefore his people return hither: and waters of a full *cup* are wrung out to them.

11 And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High?

12 Behold, these *are* the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase *in* riches.

13 Verily I have cleansed my heart *in* vain, and washed my hands in innocency.

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have little weight; of all trials to the observer that of a peaceful, fearless death ending a life of wickedness is the severest. It has probably caused more fallings away than any other, and would naturally present itself first to the Psalmist's spirit. See Note below.

their strength is firm] Literally, "fat," as in the margin, but "firm" expresses the real meaning; their body is sound, unbroken by disease or suffering to the very hour of death. We have "the rich man" of the parable faring sumptuously, till surprised by sudden and painless death. The word rendered "strength" occurs only in this passage. Ges. s. v. renders it "body."

5. *They are not in trouble*, &c.] Or, **They have no part in the trouble of men, nor are they plagued with other men.** Even in times of national calamities and visitations they seem exempt; famine and disease carry off the poor, while the rich oppressor is living in luxury. This points to a period of general suffering, not however of foreign invasion, when the rich are the chief losers, but rather to such a period as that described by Amos vi. 1—6, and Isai. ii. 7; such as probably preceded the death of Solomon, when the people were well-nigh exhausted by exactions, which brought about the revolution after his death.

6. *a chain*] The gold chain, indicating the rank of the noble, and symbolizing his pride. The original is far more striking, but quite untranslateable. Pride, so to speak, *necks* them, covers their neck, gives it stiffness, clings to it as a chain of massive gold.

garment] The long flowing robe bright with gorgeous colours and embroidery is an apt symbol of the luxurious nobility living on the spoils of an oppressed and plundered people. Cf. Ps. cix. 18.

7. *stand out with fatness*] It is strange that an image so striking and so true should have been meddled with—the projecting eye of the full-fed oppressor completes the picture. Cf. Job xv. 27; Ps. xvii. 10.

they have more than heart could wish] Or, **the imaginations of their heart overflow**, *i. e.* all their words express without restraint or shame the inward imaginings of hearts full of wickedness. Thus Hupfeld and nearly all modern critics. The word rendered "imaginations" is used of figures painted or carved on walls, especially of heathen temples (cf. Lev. xxvi. 1; Ezek. viii. 12); "idolatrous fancies" would express the true sense.

8. This verse explains the preceding sentence. It may be rendered, **They sneer, and speak wickedly of oppression; they speak haughtily**, lit. "from a height." There is no disguise, no hypocrisy, no shame or fear; what they think they say, they exult in their crimes: they see in them proofs of nobility, of superiority to men.

9. The boasting has two objects; against heaven it takes the form of blasphemy, against man that of threatening or calumny: "the walking through the earth" is a phrase especially used of calumny; the wicked, like Satan (see Job i. 7), go to and fro inventing and propagating slanders. Perowne says, "not *against* but *in* the heavens," but Hupfeld shews that the rendering "against," which is that of all ancient, and most modern, commentators, is probably correct.

10. Or, **Therefore his** (or **my**) **people turn hither, and full waters are swallowed by them.** The meaning of this striking, but somewhat obscure, passage appears to be, the people, corrupted by their example and boasts, run after them and imbibe all their principles without hesitation. The figure of drinking iniquity like water is found in Job xv. 16. Thus we read of drinking shame, suffering, and death. See Note below.

11. The result is open and avowed disbelief in God's providence. The success of wickedness, if permanent as they hold it to be, is incompatible with faith in His knowledge and power. Cf. Job xxi. 13.

12. *Behold*] This verse expresses the result of mere outward observation. **Behold these are wicked, and** (yet) **prosperous**

14 For all the day long have I been
† Heb. *my chastisement was.* plagued, and †chastened every morning.
15 If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend *against* the generation of thy children.
16 When I thought to know this,
† Heb. *it was labour in mine eyes.* †it *was* too painful for me;
17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God; *then* understood I their end.
18 Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction.
19 How are they *brought* into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors.
20 As a dream when *one* awaketh; *so*, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.

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for ever, they increase in strength. The Psalmist is supposed to be quoting another's words; but he is evidently expressing his own former feelings, and presents the problem broadly, without reserve, nearly in the same words as, and entirely in the same spirit which breathes in, the book of Job. On the one side a godless race of nobles, rich, strong, without shame, remorse, or misgiving, surrounded by abject followers; on the other, innocence, not only unrequited, but suffering afflictions, such as throughout the Old Testament are especially attributed to divine wrath.

14. *plagued*] See *v.* 5.

15. *I will speak thus*] Or, "I will tell it out thus," openly declare that such is the real state of things in the world. There are two stages of indignation, the inner feeling, and the outward expression; from the latter the Psalmist is preserved by his consciousness of the ill effects which it would produce; it would be treachery to God's people. See Note below.

offend] The word, if taken in the New Testament sense of putting a stumblingblock or temptation in the way, gives the substantial meaning of the original, which, however, may be more closely rendered "I should have betrayed," "dealt unfaithfully with."

16. *When I thought*] The word indicates a process of meditation; the Psalmist first tried to discover a rational account of the anomalies in the world's government, but the attempt resulted in nothing but confusion and trouble. Like Job and his friends, he could arrive at no conclusion.

too painful] Or, "grievous," in the twofold sense of painful and hurtful, leading to sinful as well as melancholy thoughts, such for instance as were entertained by Job, and not overcome without a divine revelation. The word is rendered "travail," and "vanity," in Eccles. iv. 4.

17. *into the sanctuary of God*] The translation is quite correct, though in the original the word is plural, "the sanctuaries of God." There in "the calmness of the sacred courts" (Kay), and in answer to prayer, the Psalmist found the solution which no effort of thought could attain: he evidently speaks of an inward, subjective movement of consciousness, but one prompted by God's Spirit.

then understood I their end] This does not exactly mean the termination of their life, but, as the word literally signifies, their after destiny, their ultimate portion. Up to the end of their life, as he points out in the first place (*v.* 4), they are supposed to be prosperous. Cf. Prov. xxiii. 17, 18. The retribution must therefore be after death, or not at all. In the three following verses five points are enumerated, in which the Psalmist finds a proof of divine judgment.

18. *slippery places*] Their position is utterly insecure, "they seem to stand, but have no hold." Cf. Ps. xxxv. 6.

destruction] When they fall, their ruin is absolute, without hope of recovery, Ps. lxxiv. 3.

19. *in a moment*] Their ruin is sudden, comes on them without warning; this touches the complaint that "they have no bands in their death."

consumed with terrors] The terrors are not mere alarms, with the horror comes destruction. The word occurs very frequently in Job, sc. xviii. 11, xxiv. 17, xxvii. 20, xxx. 15.

20. *when thou awakest*] Or, **arisest.** This translation is adopted by nearly all critics (see Note below): God's arising refers of course to the manifestation of His justice; cf. Ps. lxxviii. 65.

their image] A fine expression, denoting the unsubstantial character of that outward show which had disturbed the Psalmist; the word is especially applied to idols, and probably means a shadowy form.

Strictly speaking, all these points describe simply the destruction, death and ruin of the guilty; but they involve the thought that there is an absolute difference between their fate and that of the righteous; and inasmuch as that difference cannot consist merely in the termination of existence, however sudden and terrible, since it is but the common fate of all, and in evil times most frequently that of the patriot and martyr, it must needs refer to the state after death. In the Old Testament we have no distinct notice of a futurity of agony appointed to the wicked,

21 Thus my heart was grieved,
and I was pricked in my reins.

† Heb. *I knew not.* † Heb. *with thee.*

22 So foolish *was* I, and †ignorant: I was *as* a beast †before thee.

23 Nevertheless I *am* continually with thee: thou hast holden *me* by my right hand.

24 Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me *to* glory.

25 Whom have I in heaven *but thee?* and *there is* none upon earth *that* I desire beside thee.

26 My flesh and my heart faileth: *but* God *is* the †strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. † Heb. *rock.*

27 For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee.

28 But *it is* good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works.

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but we have here a vision of hopelessness, horror, and contempt. The last expression suggests the thought afterwards developed in Dan. xii. 2. The word "image" implies a continued, though unsubstantial, existence; the form of the man will remain, though, divested of all that disguised its misery and corruption, it will be an object of "everlasting contempt." A future judgment with everlasting issues, if not declared, is implicitly contained, in this passage.

21, 22. The Psalmist now reviews and condemns his hasty thoughts; the connection of thought is rather obscure in our A.V. The translation should run thus: **When my heart was grieved and I was pricked in my reins, then I was foolish and ignorant, I was a brute before Thee.** The word "was grieved" is very forcible, was in a state of ferment, of diseased excitement, and disturbance: "was pricked," pierced as with the sharp fang of an adder. The position is not precisely the same as that of Job, for the Psalmist gets to a conclusion, which substantially clears up the difficulty, without an outward revelation.

23. The state of the righteous in its contrast. He is with God continually, and therefore in no real danger; God holds him up, so that *he* cannot slip; through life he is guided and then received into glory. This last expression involves far more than temporal prosperity, which it is scarcely probable that the Psalmist expected, and which certainly would be no adequate compensation for undeserved affliction; the glory must be the manifestation of that abiding Presence, which even here sustains, preserves and guides the faithful.

24. The ground of hope is present faith. The Psalmist has but one object in heaven or earth: giving his heart wholly to God, he has Him wholly as his portion. The beauty of Watts's paraphrase is remarked by Delitzsch, "Were I in heaven without my God, 'Twould be no joy to me; And while this earth is mine abode, I long for none but Thee." See note on Ps. xvi. 2.

26. This verse contains a strong assertion of personal immortality; given the destruction of the flesh, even of the heart, the body with all its powers, the heart with all its faculties and endowments, yet the destruction is but seeming, at the most temporary, for God will preserve or restore that nature in which personality and perpetuity of consciousness consist, and He will be the portion of the believer for ever. All after-revelations could but confirm and justify this clear anticipation. Annihilation of consciousness was a thought inconceivable to him who held it.

28. *But it is good for me*] Or, as Dr Kay well renders it, **And as for me, nearness to God is my good.** "Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee." The Vulg., following LXX., has mihi autem adhærere Deo bonum est.

The characteristic of the wicked is separation from God, which can have but one result, absolute destruction; that of the faithful is union with Him, which secures all good in time and eternity; imposing one permanent duty, that of declaring His works.

The sum-total amounts to this; the prosperity of the wicked may, or may not, last till death, but it is a mere phantom, ending here in nothingness, and followed by everlasting shame; the life of the righteous is a journey under sure guidance, lighted by God's presence, and issuing in glory, with an entire fruition of blessedness for ever.

NOTES on PSALM LXXIII. 4, 10, 15, and 20.

4. למותם means properly "at their death:" not "until," as some would render it. This Drechsler, quoted by Perowne, 2nd edit., shews to be the true sense of ל in reference to time. The word חרצבות was evidently not understood by the ancients. LXX. have *ἀνάνευσις*, sc. escape, which perverts the sense, and may imply a different reading, perhaps

תוצאות, as in Ps. lxviii. 21, where A.V. "issues from death." This reading might also account for the Syr. ܣܘܦܐ "end," sc. exitus. Jerome and Sym. had a different reading. Aquila, however, renders it *δυσπάθειαι*. Our A.V. is correct.

10. For עמו, the LXX. have *ὁ λαός μου*, and עמי is probably the true reading. Thus Syr., Vulg., and the Arab., Æth. and Coptic translations of the LXX. מי מלא is an unusual expression; Hupfeld takes מלא to be an abstract noun, "fulness." ימצו is derived not from מצא, "to find," but from מצה=מצץ, "to swallow." Dr Kay adopts the Cethib ישיב instead of the Keri ישוב; but the latter is supported by LXX., Vulg., Syr.

15. Hupf. objects to אם before "I said." Perowne suggests, "if (said I) I should speak thus." In the second clause כמו appears, as Hupfeld thinks, to be taken as an adverb. LXX., Vulg., *οὕτως*, sic.

20. Second clause בעיר: the old versions, the Rabbins, and some modern critics take עיר to mean city; but the word evidently corresponds to הקיץ in the previous clause; differing from it perhaps in the energy of action. A man wakes, God rouses Himself, *i.e.* puts forth His power.

PSALM LXXIV.

1 *The prophet complaineth of the desolation of the sanctuary.* 10 *He moveth God to help in consideration of his power,* 18 *of his reproachful enemies, of his children, and of his covenant.*

‖ Maschil of Asaph.

‖ Or, A Psalm *for Asaph to give instruction.*

O GOD, why hast thou cast *us* off for ever? *why* doth thine anger smoke against the sheep of thy pasture?

2 Remember thy congregation, *which* thou hast purchased of old;

PSALM LXXIV.

This psalm is closely connected with the seventy-ninth, and appears to have been composed at the same time, with reference to the same events. The external circumstances of the nation are described with a completeness which might seem to leave little room for doubt as to the date. Commentators, however, are at issue, some assigning it to the period of the Chaldean invasion, others to the time of the Maccabees. An examination of the internal evidence brings out considerable difficulties connected with each of these views; more especially the latter. A third supposition, to which the writer would call the attention of readers, seems to be less open to objection, and to meet the conditions of the exegesis. The invasion of Palestine by Shishak in the reign of Rehoboam is described very briefly in 1 K. xiv. 25, 26, and 2 Chro. xii. 2—9; but from those passages we learn that "he took away the treasures of the house of the Lord and the treasures of the king's house; he took away all." The extent of that invasion, and its duration, are illustrated by the inscription on the south wall of the temple of Karnak, which Shishak set up on his return. The king is represented in the act of dragging by the hair a band of captured enemies to the feet of Amon Ra, the tutelary god, to whom he attributes his victory. In his right hand he wields the Egyptian sword or battle-axe, with a menacing gesture as though he would destroy the prisoners with a blow. The names of the places, amounting to 133, which he had captured, are inscribed in mural rings. Many of these are identified with cities in Palestine, and among them are some which were fortified by Rehoboam (see 2 Chro. xi. 5—10), *e.g.* Shoco, Adullam, Adoraim, Ajalon, and several Levitical cities, including Gibeon, "the great high place," where Solomon had offered up a thousand burnt-offerings on the altar; where also the Lord appeared to Solomon, and assured him of the fulfilment of all his wishes; see 1 K. iii. 4, 5—15. That such an invasion should not be noticed by any of the Psalmists seems improbable; and, as will be shewn, the expressions used in this psalm are suitable to the transactions which must have accompanied it. Some weight is also to be attached to the position of the psalm in the collection, among other compositions of Asaph, which belong to the period extending from the latter part of Solomon's reign nearly to the time of Asa. It is not easy to account for its introduction here on the supposition that it belongs to the time of the Babylonish captivity, or to that of the Maccabees.

The structure, like that of other psalms attributed to the elder Asaph, is highly artistic. It begins and ends with strophes of one verse each; the other strophes come in this order:

2, 4, 2, 3, 1, 3, 2, 4, 2

the middle verse 10 stands alone.

Maschil] See note on Ps. xxxii.

1. *why...for ever*] Two questions are combined, why God should have cast off His people? whether it is for ever? For ever, see *v.* 10. The Psalmist fears, but does not assert, that the desolation will be perpetual.

the sheep of thy pasture] An expression common in the psalms of Asaph; see lxxvii. 20, lxxviii. 52, lxxix. 13. The "sure mercies of David," see lxxviii. 70—72, seemed to

the [1]rod of thine inheritance, *which* thou hast redeemed; this mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwelt.

3 Lift up thy feet unto the perpetual desolations; *even* all *that* the enemy hath done wickedly in the sanctuary.

4 Thine enemies roar in the midst of thy congregations; they set up their ensigns *for* signs.

5 *A man* was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees.

6 But now they break down the carved work thereof at once with axes and hammers.

7 [2]They have cast fire into thy sanctuary, they have defiled *by casting down* the dwelling place of thy name to the ground.

[1] Or, *tribe.*

[2] Heb. *They have sent thy sanctuary into the fire.*

be withdrawn. There may be a reference to the time when God led His people like sheep (out of Egypt) by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

2. Three points are given which have a special suitableness in the case of the Egyptian invasion: the purchase, or rather the acquisition, of the congregation, see Exod. xv. 16, where the same word is used; the special redemption of the tribe of Judah (Gen. xlix. 8—10); and the choice of Mount Zion for God's dwelling; all announced in the Pentateuch. It is evident that this clause could not have been written at the time of the exile: the Psalmist speaks as an eye-witness, and as an inhabitant of Zion—*this* mount Zion.

3. *Lift up thy feet*, &c.] The meaning of this clause would seem to be that God is intreated to stand as a deliverer, or restorer, upon the ruins, which but for His interposition would be perpetual. This undoubtedly implies that buildings connected with the temple had been overthrown: but the havoc, though great, did not amount to a total destruction. The terms are stronger than can be justified by the notices of damage in the time of the Maccabees, and hardly strong enough for the total destruction of the temple by the Chaldees. That Shishak, who both as belonging to a family of priests (see Brugsch, 'Histoire d'Égypte,' p. 221), and as the ally of Jeroboam (see 1 K. xi. 40), would feel a special enmity to the sanctuary of Judah, and have committed great havoc when he *plundered* the temple, is highly probable: it accords with the practice of the Egyptians, who mutilated the fanes of hostile deities; see Chabas, 'Voyage d'un Égyptien,' p. 176.

all that, &c.] This implies that the sanctuary was still standing, the evil was done *in* the sanctuary: see too the next verse.

4. *thy congregations*] Or, **Thy place of meeting**; it means specially the spot in which Jehovah promises to meet His people; that is the Holy Precinct between the tabernacle and the altar: see note on Exod. xxix. 43. The reading of MSS. varies here between the singular and plural; the former has best authority, but the sense is substantially unaltered whichever is preferred.

their ensigns for signs] The Hebrew repeats the same word: **their *own* signs for signs**; the meaning is questioned: but the word signs undoubtedly signifies "standards" in Num. ii. 2 ff., and is probably here taken in that sense. The enemies set up their standards as symbols of their religion; see Ges. 'Thes.' p. 40 s.v. § 2. This might of course be applied to the time of Antiochus, see 1 Macc. i. 30—59, or to the Chaldees; but it is equally probable in the case of Shishak.

5. *A man was famous*] The verse is obscure, but it may be rendered, as by Dr Kay, "Each man was seen as if plying aloft hatchets in a copse of wood." In all probability it denotes the wild, fierce gestures of men cutting down the woodwork of the temple, either in wanton devastation, or, more probably, in order to carry off the golden decorations.

6. *But now*] Or, **And now they batter down the carvings thereof altogether with hatchets and hammers.** So total a devastation of the sanctuary is not intimated in connection with the Syrians. It would scarcely be dwelt upon in the account of the conflagration by Chaldees. The thorough mutilation of figures, inscriptions and decorations is characteristic of Egyptians. It is somewhat remarkable that the word rendered "hammers" occurs in old Egyptian, "karabu," or "kalaphu," Heb. "kalaph." Brugsch ('D. H.' s.v.) notices the identity of the root, though without reference to this passage.

7. *They have cast fire into thy sanctuary*] The expression in the Hebrew is peculiar, see marg. Had a total destruction by fire been meant the usual form would be "they have burnt with fire." It certainly denotes the burning either of a part of the sanctuary, or of consecrated things. The word, which is plural, may mean the temple, but it is applied to "the sanctuaries of Israel," Lev. xxvi. 31; including such places as Gibeon, see 1 K. iii. 5: and also to "holy things," see Num. iv. 19, 20. "They have cast Thy holy things into the fire on the ground," is probably the true meaning of this clause. It is evidently spoken by an eye-witness.

they have defiled, &c.] If we accept the Ma-

8 They said in their hearts, Let us † destroy them together: they have burned up all the synagogues of God in the land.

† Heb. *break.*

9 We see not our signs: *there is* no more any prophet: neither *is there* among us any that knoweth how long.

10 O God, how long shall the adversary reproach? shall the enemy blaspheme thy name for ever?

11 Why withdrawest thou thy hand, even thy right hand? pluck *it* out of thy bosom.

12 For God *is* my King of old,

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soretic punctuation the meaning may be correctly expressed by the A.V. It implies that the Holy of Holies was actually overthrown. This is quite incompatible with Syrian proceedings: very improbable in the case of Egyptians, unless indeed it were understood of the high place at Gibeon which they captured. But the LXX. connect the words "to the ground" with the preceding clause; a far more natural construction, giving the result that the holy things were cast into the fire upon the ground, of course in the courts of the temple; thus causing a defilement of the dwelling-place of Jehovah.

8. The great difficulty of reconciling this verse either with the Syrian or Chaldean devastations is felt by all interpreters. The words seem to imply an intention, not an actual fulfilment, such as was wrought by the Chaldees. The word rendered "synagogues" is the same which occurs in *v.* 4, *i.e.* places of meeting the Lord. No notice of synagogues in or out of Jerusalem is found before the captivity; no certain notice in the time of the Maccabees. It is, however, certain that "holy places," consecrated by ancient associations, and not condemned by God's law so long or so far as they were used aright, existed in various parts of Palestine, the most striking instance being that of Gibeon: see the preceding note. That the Egyptians actually besieged and captured more than one of these places is testified by the contemporaneous inscription at Thebes; that they burnt or devastated them is more than probable, see note on *v.* 3. This may therefore be regarded as a fair explanation of the passage. It is to be observed that the term there used would certainly not have been applied to any such places after the time of Hezekiah, by whom they were altogether abolished (2 K. xviii. 4, where see note), partly doubtless because of superstitious practices which had grown up around them, partly because they interfered with the supremacy of the temple at Jerusalem, and endangered the spiritual unity of the nation. Again it is certain that this term was not applied at any period to the places of worship, which may have been established under the Maccabees. The word synagogue is equivalent to the common Hebrew designation *beit hak-keneseth* (בית הכנסת), more rarely *beit vaed* (בית ועד), both meaning place, or house, of assembly, but not of a covenanted meeting with Jehovah. That Asaph, the later contemporary of Solomon, should have used it of Gibeon, or other holy places, or rather should have put it into the mouth of foreign invaders, is natural and probable. Brugsch, 'Gesch.' p. 660, notices the capture of Levitical cities, among them Gibeon, by Shishak.

9. *We see not our signs*] The reference to *v.* 4 is obvious. Instead of their own signs, whether standards (as in Num. ii.) or sacred emblems, the Israelites see those of triumphant enemies. This cannot apply to the period of the Maccabees, whose standards were raised at the beginning of their revolt. It is well suited to the state of the people after the capture of Jerusalem by Chaldees or Egyptians.

there is no more any prophet, &c.] The complaint may imply either a total cessation of prophets, or, according to a common Hebrew idiom, the withholding of a special communication declaring "how long" the infliction should last. The former alternative seems scarcely admissible: even under the Maccabees the coming of a prophet was regarded as by no means improbable (see 1 Macc. iv. 46, a passage which also shews that the altar was profaned by Antiochus, but "*pulled down*" by the pious Israelites); at the time of the Chaldean invasion at least two great prophets, Ezekiel and Jeremiah, gave distinct warnings both of the course and duration of the affliction; see Jer. xxv. 11, 12, xxix. 10; an argument, of which the full force is not removed by the words of Jeremiah at the time "her prophets also find no vision from the Lord," Lam. ii. 9, for his distinct prediction of the length and end of the captivity was first delivered in the fourth year of Jehoiakim; see Jer. xxv. 1. The second alternative is more probable; the withholding for a season of the knowledge. "how long" was a common feature of severe visitations. In the case of Judah under Rehoboam it was specially deserved, "because they had transgressed against the Lord," 1 K. xiv. 24, 25; 2 Chro. xii. 2. The want of knowledge was an appropriate chastisement for a king who had rejected wise counsels at the outset of his reign. It is also clear from *v.* 8 in Chronicles that the servitude was to last an indefinite time.

11. *pluck it out of thy bosom*] Lit. "Out of Thy bosom, make an end:" put forth Thy right hand and destroy by one blow.

working salvation in the midst of the earth.

[a] Exod. 14. 21. [†] Heb. *break.* [‖] Or, *whales.*

13 [a] Thou didst [†]divide the sea by thy strength: thou brakest the heads of the [‖]dragons in the waters.

14 Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces, *and* gavest him *to be* meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness.

[b] Exod. 17. 5. Numb. 20. 11. [c] Josh. 3. 13. [†] Heb. *rivers of strength.*

15 [b] Thou didst cleave the fountain and the flood: [c] thou driedst up [†]mighty rivers.

16 The day *is* thine, the night also *is* thine: thou hast prepared the light and the sun.

17 Thou hast set all the borders of the earth: thou hast [†]made summer and winter. [†] Heb. *made them.*

18 Remember this, *that* the enemy hath reproached, O LORD, and *that* the foolish people have blasphemed thy name.

19 O deliver not the soul of thy turtledove unto the multitude *of the wicked:* forget not the congregation of thy poor for ever.

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12. *my King of old*] Cf. Ps. xliv. 4. The reference to ancient mercies, never out of place, has a special suitableness, assuming the Egyptian invasion to be meant. It introduces a series of direct allusions to the discomfiture of Pharaoh in the Exodus.

in the midst of the earth] Thus Exod. viii. 22, "to the end thou mayest know that I am the LORD in the midst of the earth."

13. *Thou didst divide*] Or, **Thou didst cleave**; lit. break; a violent action is described. Cf. Exod. xiv. 21, where a different word is used. The Psalmist is specially concerned with the suddenness and vehemence of the act.

dragons] Or, sea-monsters; the well-known symbols of Egypt: see note on Exod. vii. 9, where the *word* is shewn to have been used by the Egyptians. The reference is evidently to the destruction of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea.

14. *leviathan*] That is, the crocodile; see Job xli. 1. The symbolical meaning is not questioned; as in Isai. xxvii. 1, it represents the Egyptian host, which was crushed by the divine power, and cast on the shores of the Red Sea. It is however to be observed that this application to Egypt is not found in the book of Job, where the leviathan symbolizes more generally the antagonistic powers of darkness, see note on Job iii. 8. There would be a peculiar suitableness in the application, if it were first made on the occasion of an Egyptian occupation of Jerusalem.

him] **them**; *i.e.* the heads of Egypt, Pharaoh and his captains.

to the people inhabiting the wilderness] On the construction, see Note below. The A.V. follows the old interpretation, which refers this to the Israelites; but in that case the expression "meat" is scarcely intelligible. Later commentators suppose dwellers in the wilderness to mean wild beasts, jackals, hyænas, &c., which devoured the carcases.

15. *Thou didst cleave*, &c.] Cf. Exod. xvii. 6; Num. xx. 11.

thou driedst up] Josh. iii. 13, &c.

The Psalmist thus rapidly goes through the whole history of the great deliverance, which he prays may be now repeated.

16. From the recapitulation of past mercies Asaph turns to the contemplation of God's power as Creator; and as such at once opposed to, and Lord over, all the agencies which the heathens, more especially the Egyptians, personified and worshipped.

the light and the sun] The first word means literally, as in Gen. i. 14, light-bearer; the word sun follows as the principal luminary. There is probably an allusion to the worship of the sun, which is thus declared to be a creature of God. In the 'Egyptian Ritual,' ch. XVII., Tum, the Sun-God, declares himself to be self-existent. The Targum takes the light-bearer to be the moon; thus too Hitzig. The LXX. have "the sun and the moon," which may indicate a different reading: but Sym. and Aq. have φωστῆρα καὶ ἥλιον.

18. *the foolish people*] The word is used specially of corrupt and ungodly sinners; see note on Job ii. 10.

19. *thy turtledove*] Song of Sol. ii. 14. The figure has a special suitableness in the mouth of one trained under Solomon. It favours the mystical or spiritual interpretation of that passage.

the multitude] In the next clause the same word is rendered "congregation." It may have the latter meaning, as in Ps. lxviii. 10. But two renderings, each requiring a slight change, are proposed. Hupfeld (transposing the prep. *to*), "Give not up to violence the life of Thy turtle-dove: forget not for ever the life of Thy poor." Dr Kay, "Give not over Thy turtle-dove to the herd of wild will." This needs only a change of punctuation. See Note below.

20 Have respect unto the covenant: for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.

21 O let not the oppressed return ashamed: let the poor and needy praise thy name.

22 Arise, O God, plead thine own cause: remember how the foolish man reproacheth thee daily.

23 Forget not the voice of thine enemies: the tumult of those that rise up against thee † increaseth continually. † Heb. *ascendeth.*

20. *unto the covenant*] See Gen. xvii. 7, 8; the reference, suitable at all times of affliction, is peculiarly so when the Psalmist apprehends captivity, or loss of the possession of Canaan, given to the seed of Abraham for an everlasting possession.

the dark places] The word is specially used of Sheol, or Hell: cf. Ps. lxxxviii. 6; Lam. iii. 6; compare Job x. 21. In this passage it must mean the heathen land where the Israelites had been, or feared to be, in bondage. The reference to Egypt, the iron furnace, the house of spiritual darkness and physical misery, is obvious.

habitations of cruelty] Dr Kay, "homesteads of violence;" the latter word means specially "unjust violence," such as that of the Egyptian oppressors.

23. *increaseth continually*] **ascendeth**, as in marg.; it goes up to heaven calling for punishment. Cf. Gen. iv. 10, xviii. 20, and Exod. iii. 7—9.

NOTES on PSALM LXXIV. 14, 19.

14. לעם לציים. The construction is ungrammatical. Dr Kay renders, "for a people among the desert tribes," meaning thereby a prey for the jackals and hyænas, who claim the desert as their own. The LXX. and Vulg. λαοῖς τοῖς Αἰθίοψι, populis Æthiopum, which implies a different, but certainly corrupt, reading. Syr. has "to a strong people," which points to a different reading, sc. עצום.

19. It may be assumed as certain (1) that חיה is stat. const., and must therefore be followed by a noun; (2) that it must have the same meaning in both clauses. Hence we have no alternative but either to read with Hupf. חיה תורך, "the life of Thy turtle-dove," placing ל before נפש, sc. to greed, or bloodthirstiness; or, with Dr Kay, to take חיה נפש together; "a tribe of greediness." The latter requires less change, and avoids the difficulty of taking נפש apart in the sense of greed.

PSALM LXXV.

1 *The prophet praiseth God.* 2 *He promiseth to judge uprightly.* 4 *He rebuketh the proud by consideration of God's providence.* 9 *He praiseth God, and promiseth to execute justice.*

To the chief Musician, ‖Al-taschith, A Psalm *or* Song ‖of Asaph. ‖ Or, *Destroy not.* ‖ Or, *for Asaph.*

UNTO thee, O God, do we give thanks, *unto thee* do we give thanks: for *that* thy name is near thy wondrous works declare.

2 ‖When I shall receive the congregation I will judge uprightly. ‖ Or, *When I shall take a set time.*

3 The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved: I bear up the pillars of it. Selah.

4 I said unto the fools, Deal not

PSALM LXXV.

The Psalmist describes the manifestation of God's righteousness in a time of great affliction. The date is uncertain, but it probably belongs to the same age as the other psalms attributed to Asaph in this part of the collection. The style is archaic, abrupt, and rather obscure, but full of energy and grandeur.

The structure is graceful, one introductory verse, then four strophes, each of two verses (2—8, the 8th has two metres), and a close which recapitulates the leading thoughts in *vv.* 1 and 4.

Al-taschith] *i.e.* Destroy not. See note on Ps. lvii.

1. *for that*, &c.] Or, **and Thy name is near, Thy wondrous works have declared it.** This is on the whole the most probable translation. Thus Hupfeld. By the nearness of God's name the Psalmist means the manifestation of God's attributes. God hath shewn Himself, and past wonders have declared His power and justice. See, however, Note below.

2. *When I shall receive*] The marg. **When I shall take a set time** is preferable. The speaker is God, the "set time" is the time appointed for judgment, "the day of the Lord." The application to Christ is obvious, but the Psalmist contemplated an immediate interposition and with reference to then existing evils: see notes on the preceding psalm.

3. *dissolved*] *i.e.* with terror, as before the last judgment, "men's hearts failing them for fear."

I bear up] Or, "I have established." The

foolishly: and to the wicked, Lift not up the horn:

5 Lift not up your horn on high: speak *not with* a stiff neck.

6 For promotion *cometh* neither from the east, nor from the west, nor
† Heb. *desert.* from the †south.

7 But God *is* the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.

8 For in the hand of the LORD *there is* a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring *them* out, *and* drink *them*.

9 But I will declare for ever; I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.

10 All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off; *but* the horns of the righteous shall be exalted.

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same Almighty power which at the creation set fast the foundations of the earth will maintain fixed order in the midst of all convulsions. The expression "pillars" may, however, be metaphorical, meaning "rulers," as in 1 S. ii. 8, and as "foundations," Ps. xi. 3, lxxxii. 5.

4. *fools*] Here in the sense of empty foolish boasters, as in Ps. v. 5, and lxxiii. 3, to which there is an obvious reference.

Lift not up the horn] The word "lift up" occurs four times in two verses; it marks the leading thought, the pride and self-confidence of God's enemies; the best illustration is found in the speech of Rabshakeh, to which it seems probable that the Psalmist directly alludes.

6. *promotion*] Or, "lifting up." This rendering is much contested, but it is adopted by Hupfeld, and appears to accord better with the context than any which has been proposed in its place. The meaning of the verse is that power comes from no earthly quarter. The "north" is not mentioned, either because the Psalmist passes rapidly to the assertion of God's power, or because the people of Judæa did not expect deliverance from that quarter: the Assyrians themselves came from the north.

from the south] Literally, "desert," but the A. V. gives the meaning.

7. *setteth up*] Or, **lifteth up**; see note above on *v.* 5.

8. *the wine is red*] **and it** (the cup) **foams with wine, full of mixture**, *i.e.* strong spiced wine. A well-known and common figure of divine wrath. See Jer. xxv. 15, xlix. 12, li. 7; Isai. li. 17; Ezek. xxiii. 32, 33; Hab. ii. 16.

NOTE on PSALM LXXV. 1.

The LXX. followed by Vulg. and Syr. had a different and easier reading, καὶ ἐπικαλεσόμεθα τὸ ὄνομά σου· διηγήσομαι (Vulg. narrabimus) πάντα τὰ θαυμάσιά σου· *i.e.* נקרא בשמך נספרה. The change is very slight. It has the advantage of accounting for the Masoretic reading קרוב.

PSALM LXXVI.

1 *A declaration of God's majesty in the church.*
11 *An exhortation to serve him reverently.*

To the chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm
‖ Or, *for Asaph.* *or* Song ‖of Asaph.

IN Judah *is* God known: his name *is* great in Israel.

2 In Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion.

3 There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. Selah.

4 Thou *art* more glorious *and* excellent than the mountains of prey.

PSALM LXXVI.

There can be little doubt that this psalm refers to the destruction of Sennacherib's army. Such is the opinion both of the ancient and of most modern commentators. It is closely connected with the preceding psalm, written before the judgment which is here represented as consummated.

The structure is regular, four strophes, each of three verses; the first and third marked by Selah.

1. *is God known*] *i.e.* by the manifestation of His power, both in former times and now by the miraculous destruction of the invading army, cf. Ps. xlviii.

2. *Salem*] The ancient name of Jerusalem, see Gen. xiv. 18; Heb. vii. 1, 2.

his tabernacle] This alludes to the first establishment of the tabernacle in David's time; instead of "is" read "was," *i.e.* was set up.

3. *the arrows of the bow*] Literally, **the**

5 The stouthearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep: and none of the men of might have found their hands.

6 At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and horse are cast into a dead sleep.

7 Thou, *even* thou, *art* to be feared: and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?

8 Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven; the earth feared, and was still,

9 When God arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth. Selah.

10 Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.

11 Vow, and pay unto the LORD your God: let all that be round about him bring presents †unto him that ought to be feared. † Heb. *to fear.*

12 He shall cut off the spirit of princes: *he is* terrible to the kings of the earth.

PSALM LXXVII.

1 *The psalmist sheweth what fierce combat he had with diffidence.* 10 *The victory which he had by consideration of God's great and gracious works.*

To the chief Musician, to Jeduthun, ‖ A Psalm of Asaph. ‖ Or, *for Asaph.*

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lightnings of the bow, a graphic figure, which might have been preserved in the translation: in Ps. lxxviii. 48, the word is rendered "hot thunder-bolts," in Deut. xxxii. 24, "burning heat."

4. *Thou art more glorious*] Or, **Thou art glorious, majestic from the mountains of spoil.** (Thus LXX., Aq., Sym., Theod.) The comparison with the mountains of prey, *i.e.* the strongholds of the invaders, which is adopted by most commentators, and is expressed in our A. V., is hardly satisfactory. By the "mountains of spoil" Hupfeld understands Jerusalem. God is thus said to manifest His glory and majesty from the stronghold where the spoils of the invaders are divided. The Song of Sol. iv. 4 may be compared, if, as a friend suggests, the shields which adorned the towers of Jerusalem were spoils of the mighty slain. The verse might be paraphrased, "Thou, O God, art arrayed in light, Thou hast displayed Thy majesty on Mount Zion, where the spoils of Thy enemies are distributed to Thy people."

5. *slept their sleep*] The sleep of death: a figure which is peculiarly appropriate to the destruction of the Assyrian army in the dead of night.

none...have found their hands] This phrase is remarkable; it seems to represent a death which comes suddenly, yet with a momentary interval of consciousness; the sleeper, awakened by a sudden pang, endeavours in vain to put out his hands and grasp his weapons, but falls back overwhelmed by the deep sleep, which in the next verse is said to fall on chariot and horse, *i.e.* the whole army of the invaders.

7—9. The description of the effect of God's judgments upon the people is very striking; the tones are grave, solemn, speaking rather of awe than exultation; the only grace which the Psalmist claims for his people is meekness, a consciousness of weakness, and dependence on God's power.

10. The meaning of the first clause appears to be that all the wrath and violence of man do but serve to bring out the attributes of God, and so display His glory; the second clause is more doubtful; our version gives a fair sense, God will put an end to all other outbursts of fury on the part of His enemies. This interpretation is defended by Calvin, Venema, Doederlein, and Dathe (who follow Kimchi), and it is supported by an analogous use of the original word in Arabic, Syriac, and in the Mishna. The interpretation suggested by modern commentators seems forced and unnatural, "Thou wilt gird Thyself with the remainder of wrath," *i.e.* God will take the fury of His enemies and adorn Himself with it as a robe of triumph. Delitzsch proposes "with a remainder of wrath wilt Thou gird Thyself," *i.e.* should the enemies' rage be renewed, God will arm Himself with fresh wrath, a reserve, so to speak, of vengeance, in order to subdue it; such too is the explanation of a second Targumist.

11. *unto him that ought to be feared*] This translation is correct, but less forcible than the single word in the original, **the terrible**, the awful and terrible God. The same word is used by Isaiah, viii. 13.

12. *cut off*] The original word is used especially of cutting grapes in the vintage, and refers to the terrible consummation of judgments so often described by the prophets; see Joel i. 13; Rev. xiv. 18; and cf. Isai. xviii. 5.

PSALM LXXVII.

The Psalmist in great distress, of what kind we cannot say, but in common, probably (as the deliverances related are national), with his people, earnestly entreats God for succour, and, at first, seems to despair of it; the recollection of former prosperities, and of mercies

I CRIED unto God with my voice, *even* unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me.

2 In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: † my sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted.

† Heb. *my hand.*

3 I remembered God, and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Selah.

4 Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak.

5 I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times.

6 I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search.

7 Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more?

8 Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth *his* promise fail † for evermore?

† Heb. *to generation and generation?*

9 Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah.

10 And I said, This *is* my infirmity: *but I will remember* the years of the right hand of the most High.

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vouchsafed in times past, being only painful (*vv.* 4—9). At last, the Spirit of God suggests the thought, that as He was, so He is; and that His power manifested so often in deliverances of His people would quickly be manifested again. The miraculous deliverance which at the instant vividly impresses the imagination of the Psalmist and turns his despair into hope, is the passage of the Red Sea: in a description of which he rests, dwelling upon its circumstances with a sublime power.

The 3rd chapter of Habakkuk should be read with this psalm, to which it contains frequent allusions, and of which it is in some sense a continuation. The psalm can scarcely be an imitation. Its purpose and unity forbid such a supposition: but its spirit, and some phrases in it, may have so impressed themselves upon the national memory, as to be repeated in later prophecy. The expressions in Habakkuk, which seem imitations of the psalm, are fuller. We may conclude with some certainty that it is earlier than the reigns of Josiah or Manasseh, the age of Habakkuk; but beyond this, it is hard to decide anything as to its date. Hengst. and others argue (chiefly from *vv.* 16 and 2 compared with Gen. xxxvii. 35) that the psalm is a lament for the carrying away of the Ten Tribes: but the contents do not specially suit such occasion.

1. *I cried unto God*, &c.] Lit. "My voice (is) unto God, and I cry aloud: my voice (is) unto God, (and I say) Oh hearken unto me!" or, "May He hearken to me." The rendering of A.V., *and He gave ear unto me*, does not suit the idea of the psalm. Hope does not spring up till *v.* 10.

2. *my sore ran*, &c.] Marg., my hand. The meaning is, My hand is stretched out (in prayer and supplication) all night; and ceases not (to be outspread). See Note below.

vv. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5—9 contain a description of the Psalmist during his agony of doubt which is at its climax, almost of despair, in *v.* 7. The tenses in the original are sometimes present, sometimes past, but the purport seems always present.

3. *I complained*] Rather, "I muse" or "meditate."

4. *Thou holdest mine*, &c.] "I sleep not through the night, for Thou holdest mine eyes fast, that they watch (as if on sentry) all night. I speak not, for Thou tiest fast my tongue, so that I cannot relieve myself through speaking." There is doubt as to the meaning of one word, "watches" or "wakings" of the eyes (שְׁמֻרוֹת), which some authorities (Gesen., Moll, Delitzsch, Bunsen, &c.) render "eyelids." "Thou holdest fast mine eyelids that I cannot close them," &c. The general sense is the same, with this rendering, as that given before.

5, 6. *I have considered*, &c.] "I consider the long series of past years and prosperity: I remember the songs which I have often poured forth in the night for mercies received (see Job xxxv. 10), and my spirit anxiously asks, Will the Lord," &c. Cf. Ps. lxxiv. 1. At the end of *v.* 9 there is a pause, and a ray of comfort is suggested in *v.* 10.

8. *promise*] See Ps. cxix. 38, *Stablish Thy word*, or promise, *unto Thy servant:* see too Ps. lvi. 4.

9. *hath he in anger shut up*, &c.] "As a man shuts his hand upon a gift which he refuses to bestow, does God shut up His tender mercies within His breast?" (see Deut. xv. 7).—*Selah*, see Ps. lxviii. 7: the import here is the same as in that place: the accompaniments of music and voices are raised to indicate a change in the spirit of the Psalmist, and a consolation suggested by God Himself. Below, *v.* 15, the import is to add force to the description of the awful passage.

10. *And I said, This is my*, &c.] Or, "Then I said, It is mine own infirmity." See Deut.

11 I will remember the works of the LORD: surely I will remember thy wonders of old.

12 I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.

13 Thy way, O God, *is* in the sanctuary: who *is so* great a God as *our* God?

14 Thou *art* the God that doest wonders: thou hast declared thy strength among the people.

15 Thou hast with *thine* arm redeemed thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah.

16 The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled.

17 †The clouds poured out water: the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad.

† Heb. *The clouds were poured forth with water.*

18 The voice of thy thunder *was* in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook.

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xxix. 22; the Hebrew word "sicknesses" is similar to "infirmity" in the text.

the years of the right hand of the most High] "My despair is mine own weakness: (remember) the years in which the right hand of the Most High has helped us." The thought suggested to the despairing Psalmist is rather hinted at, than expressed, in three words, "years," "right hand," and "Most High" (in the original). They convey the notion of rapid thought, like lightning, passing through his mind. The words "but I will remember" are not in the original. Others (De Wette, Delitzsch, Hupfeld, Bunsen) explain differently, "I said, It is mine appointed lot and trial (Jer. x. 19; 1 Pet. v. 6): years (these are) which the mighty hand of God has laid upon me." Or, "It is mine appointed lot and trial, that the right hand of the Most High has turned against me." So the LXX., Vulg., Chald. The interpretation given first is the most expressive; and seems best to suit the context, and the words which follow, *v.* 11, &c.

11. *I will remember*] Or, make mention of: *the works of the* LORD, or, of JAH. There is force in the mention of God by this Name. The eternal unchangeable Jehovah will act towards His people, always, as of old: Ps. lxviii. 4.

12. *I will meditate*, &c., *and talk*, &c.] Saying, *v.* 13, *Thy way*, &c. The word rendered *talk* should rather be "muse" as in *v.* 3.

13. *in the sanctuary*] Rather, "in holiness," or, "encompassed with holiness;" *i.e.* "most holy:" as the Prayer-Book Version, "Thy way, O God! is holy." Holiness is the characteristic of the way of Jehovah above all gods! See Ps. lxviii. 24, *They have seen Thy goings...in the sanctuary*, or, "in holiness." The allusion is to Exod. xv. 11. See also Exod. xv. 13—16, at *v.* 15 of this psalm.

14. *thou hast declared*, &c.] "Thou hast manifested Thy might among the nations."

15. *the sons of Jacob and Joseph*] Commentators refine too much upon this description, when they say that Joseph is mentioned as in a sense the first-born of Jacob (1 Chro. v. 1), and having a double inheritance (Gen. xlviii. 5, 6). The deeds and deservings of Joseph fully explain the selection of his name before that of any other son of Jacob. See Pss. lxxviii. 67, lxxx. 1, lxxxi. 4, 5.

16. *The waters*, &c.] Cf. Pss. xcvii., cxiv. "The waters of the Red Sea *saw* God, *trembled*, and made way for His people to pass!" The consequence is not added in the text: only the fact noticed, that "the waters saw God." The accompaniments of the passage follow, *vv.* 18, 19, *i.e.* rain, thunder, lightning, and, perhaps, a horrible whirlwind.

17. *The clouds*, &c.] The marg. is better: "The clouds were poured forth with water." *The skies sent out a sound*, or, the heavens uttered a voice (in thunder): *Thine arrows went abroad*, hither, thither, and everywhere.

18. *The voice of thy thunder*, &c.] Hebr. "The voice of Thy thunder was in the wheel." So the LXX., Vulg. and others. "Wheel," some think, is put for "chariot," and indicates the "chariot of God," in which (see Hab. iii. 8, 15) He troubled the Egyptians. But the "chariot" is not mentioned in the psalm, and the ellipsis is violent. Most interpreters render the word, above translated "wheel" and in the A.V. "the heaven," by "whirlwind." The transition from "wheel" to "whirlwind" is easy. In Isai. xvii. 13 the word in question seems to mean "thistledown," or, "a light thing whirling before the wind." In Ps. lxxxiii. 13, it is parallel to "stubble." In the first of these places the A.V. renders it "a rolling thing," in the latter "a wheel." A whirlwind is not the necessary accompaniment of thunder, and its abrupt curt mention with the thunder is harsh. Grotius conceives that "wheel" is put for "the air" or "æther," which common opinion regards as whirling round about us. This idea led probably to the rendering of the A.V. "the heaven," and of the Prayer-Book Version "round about."

19 Thy way *is* in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known.

20 [a]Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron. [a] Exod. 14. 19.

20. After the preparation detailed above, God made a way for His people through the sea, and they followed Him: but Himself is unseen, and His miracles only indicate His presence. So too in nature, and in the spirit of man, His presence, says Del., is not seen; it is only inferred from the deeds which He has done and the traces which He has left.

Abp. Secker (notes on the Psalms in Meyrick's translation, p. 166) remarks on this psalm, that something is wanting, and that it ends abruptly: similarly Thol., Rosen., Olsh., &c. But its abruptness is expressive. In the joy and exultation of the miracle recorded, the occasion of the psalm is forgotten: and the Psalmist, casting off the burden that oppressed him at its commencement, reposes in full confidence on his Almighty protector. "The minstrel" (says Vaihinger) "lets his harp drop, and reclines in fulness of faith on God's love."

NOTE on PSALM LXXVII. 2.

The Hebrew word (נִגְּרָה) explained above "stretched out," is of doubtful import: it means rather "poured out" like water (*we are as water spilt on the ground*, 2 S. xiv. 14); as if the hand were thrown out in supplication, and stretched out, so as scarcely to be drawn back. Or it may be that a word properly applied to a flood of tears that ceases not is boldly applied to the hand, which ceases not to be extended and to supplicate. A somewhat similar expression Lam. iii. 49, *Mine eye trickleth down* (Heb. is poured out or spilled, &c.) *and ceaseth not, without any intermission.* The Targum, to avoid the difficulty, renders "By night mine eye distilled in tears:" as if the word translated "hand" or "sore" meant "eye." The Rabbins interpret the same word "my wound;" hence no doubt the A.V.

PSALM LXXVIII.

1 *An exhortation both to learn and to preach the law of God.* 9 *The story of God's wrath against the incredulous and disobedient.* 67 *The Israelites being rejected, God chose Judah, Zion, and David.*

‖ Or, A Psalm *for Asaph to give instruction.*

‖ Maschil of Asaph.

GIVE ear, O my people, *to* my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

2 [a]I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: [a] Ps. 49. 4. Matth. 13. 35.

PSALM LXXVIII.

The history of Israel, from the Exodus to the establishment of the kingdom of David, is reviewed by the Psalmist in this the longest, and probably the earliest, of the historical psalms, intended for public recitation in the services of the sanctuary. Those services were organized by David, and the chief place among the superintendents was assigned to Asaph (see notes on Ps. l.), to whom this psalm is attributed by the inscription. The principal object of the writer is to draw lessons of warning and admonition from the records of national sins and punishments. Special attention is directed to the wrongdoings of one tribe, that of Ephraim; partly, it may be, as having from the time of Joshua throughout the period of the Judges held the post of leader of the whole nation, and as such being in some sense its representative; partly, however, with reference to the transfer of the national sanctuary from Shiloh to Mount Zion (see *vv.* 67, 68). It seems strange that the appropriateness of this subject to the age of David should be questioned. When the large band of singers in the temple were appointed, chosen doubtless with reference to their spiritual and mental qualifications, one main duty must have been to inculcate the lessons derived from the events of national history; and no events could present stronger claims than those described in this psalm. It was impossible that the transfer of the sanctuary should not have been celebrated, most improbable that the circumstances which preceded and occasioned the transfer should have been passed over in silence. Those circumstances are not described in terms calculated to give reasonable ground of offence to the powerful tribe of Ephraim, nor in such as indicate a settled feeling of animosity: the guilt is described as national, nor is any exemption from it claimed for the tribe of Judah. It is indeed certain that the rivalry between Ephraim and Judah, of which traces may be pointed out in earlier times, burst out into an open quarrel at the time of David's

3 Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.

4 We will not hide *them* from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.

5 For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, [b] that they should make them known to their children:

[b] Deut. 4. 9. & 6. 7.

6 That the generation to come might know *them*, *even* the children *which* should be born; *who* should arise and declare *them* to their children:

7 That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments:

8 And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation [†] *that* set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not stedfast with God.

[†] Heb. that *prepared not their heart.*

9 The children of Ephraim, *being*

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restoration to the kingdom, see 2 S. xix. 41—43, when "the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel;" and such feelings may have given a certain tone to the utterances of the Psalmist. David might have been more careful in his own compositions to spare the susceptibilities of so considerable a portion of his subjects, but it would scarcely occur to him to suppress statements at once true, important in their spiritual bearings, and delivered under the guidance of God. The psalm, however, may have been composed some few years after the accession of Solomon, though it is doubtful whether the allusion in *v.* 69 implies the existence of the temple.

Had the work been written after the revolt of the ten tribes, some reference to that event, and to their relapse into idolatry, might have been looked for: nor would a writer, after the exile, have failed to point out the far more terrible warnings suggested by the captivity of Judah and destruction of the temple.

The style of the whole psalm accords with the date and authorship thus assigned to it. It has the characteristics of Asaph, gravity, force, "a lofty judicial tone, with awful warnings and admonitions:" there are also special points of resemblance with other psalms which belong to him or to the Korahites: see notes on *vv.* 1, 2, 7, 12, 17, &c.

The structure of the psalm is thoroughly symmetrical; it is divided at the end of *v.* 31 into two parts, each consisting of seven strophes: in the first part five, each with four verses, then two with five and six verses severally: in the second part five strophes with six verses each, wound up, like the first portion, with two of five and six: thus presenting the schema:

4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 5, 6;
6, 6, 6, 6, 6, 5, 6.

1. *Give ear, O my people*] This exordium befits the position and character of Asaph, and bears a striking resemblance to his style. In the fiftieth psalm he speaks as a prophet calling the people to listen to the words of the Lord; here he speaks in the name of God as a public teacher, commissioned to proclaim and explain the law. Cf. Isai. li. 4, and xlix. 1. Compare "my law" with Ps. lxxxix. 30; "my people," l. 7, lxxvii. 15, 20.

2. *I will open my mouth*] See marg. references, and note on Job iii. 1.

a parable] Here in the widest sense, in sententious sayings, drawing out the hidden meaning of ancient records.

utter] The word implies a strong impulse; the words are forced out by an inward movement. Sym. ἀναβλύσω προβλήματα ἀρχαῖα.

dark sayings] Sayings which contain deeper truths than lie on the surface. In Arabic the word occurs in the sense of a simile or allegory. Cf. Prov. i. 6; Judg. xiv. 12. The expressions in this verse belong specially to the age of Solomon. Köster supposes a reference to the artistic structure: which seems far less probable.

sayings of old] Cf. Ps. lxxvii. 5, 11.

4. *We will not hide*, &c.] Asaph dwells upon the thought that in discharging this duty of a teacher he is obeying the ancient injunction of the law; cf. Deut. iv. 9, vi. 7, xi. 19; see also Job xv. 18. Points of resemblance with Job are numerous in all the songs of Asaph.

6. *the children which should be born*] See Ps. xxii. 31.

7. *works of God*] See Ps. lxxvii. 12.

8. *a stubborn and rebellious generation*] Asaph here strikes the key-note of his exhortation. It is peculiar to the prophets and teachers of Israel to urge without sparing the warnings derived from the sins of their forefathers. Cf. Deut. ix. 7, 24, xxi. 18, 20, xxxi. 27; Jer. v. 23. In the whole of the following section to *v.* 54, Asaph dwells upon the scenes in the wilderness.

set not their heart aright] Or, "established," directed it aright. See Job xi. 13.

9. *The children of Ephraim*] The mention of Ephraim in this passage is undoubtedly

armed, *and* †carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle.

† Heb. *throwing forth.*

10 They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in his law;

11 And forgat his works, and his wonders that he had shewed them.

12 Marvellous things did he in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt, *in* the field of Zoan.

13 [c]He divided the sea, and caused them to pass through; and he made the waters to stand as an heap.

[c] Exod. 14. 21.

14 [d]In the daytime also he led them with a cloud, and all the night with a light of fire.

[d] Exod. 13. 21. & 14. 24.

15 [e]He clave the rocks in the wilderness, and gave *them* drink as *out of* the great depths.

[e] Exod. 17. 6. Numb. 20. 11. Ps. 105. 41. 1 Cor. 10. 4.

16 He brought streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers.

17 And they sinned yet more against him by provoking the most High in the wilderness.

18 And they tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lust.

19 [f]Yea, they spake against God; they said, Can God †furnish a table in the wilderness?

[f] Numb. 11. 4. † Heb. *order.*

20 [g]Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people?

[g] Exod. 17. 6. Numb. 20. 11.

21 Therefore the LORD heard *this*, and was wroth: so a fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel;

22 Because they believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation:

23 Though he had commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of heaven,

24 [h]And had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven.

[h] Exod. 16. 14. John 6. 31.

25 ‖Man did eat angels' food: he sent them meat to the full.

‖ Or, *Every one did eat the bread of the mighty.*

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perplexing. The reference must certainly be to an event in the early history of Israel. A double charge is brought against the Ephraimites, cowardice in battle, and disobedience to God. The former charge cannot refer to a defeat by Judah, but by some heathen nation, probably to the transactions recorded in Judges ii. 10—16. Peculiar responsibility may have attached to Ephraim, as inheriting the hegemony from Joshua. See too the note on Josh. xvii. 14. It is also possible that the national guilt of idolatry was specially connected with the tribe of Ephraim; cf. Hos. iii. 3. Still in all other passages both charges are brought against the nation as such, and might be expected to be urged by Asaph, who addressed these words in the first place to the people of Judah. Conjectural emendations are always unsatisfactory, but it is perhaps allowable in this passage to assume that the name of Ephraim may have been substituted by a transcriber for that of Israel: cf. *v.* 57.

12. *Zoan*] From Num. xiii. 22 we learn that Zoan was built seven years after Hebron. Zoan or Tanis, now San, was a city of great importance, and the chief residence of the Pharaohs of the 18th and 19th dynasties on the North-western frontier. See note on Exod. v. 1. The mention of the name in this passage may either be attributed to an ancient tradition independent of the Pentateuch, or to the knowledge of Egypt which was a result of the friendly intercourse of David and the marriage of Solomon with an Egyptian princess. It has, therefore, a peculiar propriety in the mouth of the elder Asaph. In the Egyptian 'Zeitschrift' for 1872, p. 16, an account is given by Brugsch of an inscription in which the hieroglyphic name of Zoan, exactly corresponding with the Hebrew, is for the first time discovered, with the further peculiarity of expression, *Sochet Zoan, i.e.* "the field of Zoan." In the same article Brugsch shews that Zoan is not, as he formerly supposed, identical with Avaris, but with Rameses, the city from which the Israelites started on their march out of Egypt: two points of great importance in reference to this psalm, and to Exodus.

13. *as an heap*] Exod. xv. 8.

16. *the rock*] Or, "cliff;" cf. Num. xx. 8, 10, 11.

17. *the most High*] Cf. 35, 36, and lxxvii. 10.

18. *they tempted*] Sc. by inwardly questioning His goodness and power. Exod. xvi.; 1 Cor. x. 9.

21. *was wroth*] Deut. iii. 26.

23. *the doors of heaven*] Gen. vii. 11.

25. *angels' food*] Lit. "bread of mighty ones;" but the interpretation of the A. V., which follows the old versions (see also Wisd. xvi. 20, xix. 20), and is defended by modern

26 He caused an east wind †to blow in the heaven: and by his power he brought in the south wind.

27 He rained flesh also upon them as dust, and †feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea:

28 And he let *it* fall in the midst of their camp, round about their habitations.

29 So they did eat, and were well filled: for he gave them their own desire;

30 They were not estranged from [f]Numb.11. 33. their lust. But [i]while their meat *was* yet in their mouths,

31 The wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and †smote down the ‖chosen *men* of Israel.

32 For all this they sinned still, and believed not for his wondrous works.

33 Therefore their days did he consume in vanity, and their years in trouble.

34 When he slew them, then they sought him: and they returned and inquired early after God.

35 And they remembered that God *was* their rock, and the high God their redeemer.

36 Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues.

37 For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant.

38 But he, *being* full of compassion, forgave *their* iniquity, and destroyed *them* not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath.

39 For he remembered that they *were but* flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.

40 How oft did they ‖provoke him in the wilderness, *and* grieve him in the desert!

41 Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.

42 They remembered not his hand, *nor* the day when he delivered them ‖from the enemy.

43 How he had †wrought his signs in Egypt, and his wonders in the field of Zoan:

44 [k]And had turned their rivers into blood; and their ‖floods, that they could not drink.

45 [l]He sent divers sorts of flies among them, which devoured them; and frogs, which destroyed them.

† Heb. *to go.*

† Heb. *fowl of wing.*

† Heb. *made to bow.* ‖ Or, *young men.*

‖ Or, *rebel against him.*

‖ Or, *from affliction.* † Heb. *set.*

[k] Exod. 7. 20.

[l] Exod. 8. 6, 24.

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critics (Hupfeld, Delitzsch, &c.), is probably correct; not, however, in the sense "food such as angels have," but "supplied by angelic ministrations," equivalent to "the corn of heaven" in the preceding clause. The symbolism of manna is recognized by all Christian divines, and rests upon the authority of our Lord, from whose words, however, it is clear that manna was a product of earth, supplied by heavenly power, and but a figure of the true bread "which cometh down from heaven," Joh. vi. 49—51.

30. *They were not estranged from their lust*] *i. e.* they had not as yet satiated their appetite; or, "had not yet repented of their desire;" thus Syr., Hitz., Stier.

31. *the fattest of them*] See xxii. 29.

33. *in vanity*] The Hebrew word is used specially of short and insecure life, as in Gen. iv. 2, the name Abel, or Hebel. The whole generation died out prematurely.

34. *inquired early*] Or, "earnestly." See note on lxiii. 1.

35. *their rock*] See Deut. xxxii. 4.
their redeemer] See lxxiv. 2; Isa. xli. 14, xliii. 14, &c.

37. *stedfast*] Or, "faithful." The same word is used in *v.* 8.

38. *full of compassion*] See Exod. xxxiv. 6.

39. *he remembered*] Ps. ciii. 14, 16; Job vii. 7, x. 9; and cf. Gen. vi. 3.
a wind] Job vii. 7.

40. *grieve*] Cf. Eph. iv. 30.

41. *limited*] In their minds set limits to His power. The Hebrew word is rare, and the meaning disputed; the A.V. is defended by Stier, Hengst., Del. Others follow the LXX. παρώξυναν, "provoked;" thus Luther, Hupfeld: the meaning in that case would be drawn from the Syriac.

43. *Zoan*] See *v.* 12.

45. *divers sorts*] See note on Exod. viii. 17, 21; where, however, the words "a species of beetle" are not strictly correct, since, as a naturalist informs the writer, the blatta orientalis is a sort of cockroach. In this passage Sym. has κυνόμυιαν.

46 [m] He gave also their increase unto the caterpiller, and their labour unto the locust.

47 [n] He [†] destroyed their vines with hail, and their sycomore trees with [‖] frost.

48 [†] He gave up their cattle also to the hail, and their flocks to [‖] hot thunderbolts.

49 He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels *among them*.

50 [†] He made a way to his anger; he spared not their soul from death, but gave [‖] their life over to the pestilence;

51 [o] And smote all the firstborn in Egypt; the chief of *their* strength in the tabernacles of Ham:

52 But made his own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock.

53 And he led them on safely, so that they feared not: but the sea [†] overwhelmed their enemies.

54 And he brought them to the border of his sanctuary, *even to* this mountain, *which* his right hand had purchased.

55 He cast out the heathen also before them, and [q] divided them an inheritance by line, and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents.

56 Yet they tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies:

57 But turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers: they were turned aside like a deceitful bow.

58 [r] For they provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images.

59 When God heard *this*, he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel:

60 [s] So that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent *which* he placed among men;

61 And delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemy's hand.

[m] Exod. 10. 13.
[n] Exod. 9. 23.
† Heb. *killed.*
‖ Or, *great hailstones.*
† Heb. *He shut up.*
‖ Or, *lightnings.*
† Heb. *He weighed a path.*
‖ Or, *their beasts to the murrain,* Exod. 9. 3.
[o] Exod. 9. 3. & 12. 29.
[p] Exod. 14. 27. & 15. 10.
† Heb. *covered.*
[q] Josh. 13. 7.
[r] Deut. 32. 21.
[s] 1 Sam. 4. 11.

46. *the caterpiller*] Asaph uses a more specific word than is given in Ex. x. 1—20. It occurs in Joel i. 4, ii. 25.

47. *their vines*] On the vineyards of Egypt see note on Gen. xl. 9.

49. *by sending evil angels among them*] Or, **a mission of angels of woe**; thus Kay. The evil is not necessarily in the nature of the angels, but in the penalties which they are commissioned to inflict; see, however, Job i. and Introduction, p. 16. Natural agencies may possibly be included. See Ps. civ. 4.

51. *Ham*] The father of Mizraim: Chem, or Ham (black), is the Egyptian name of the whole country, derived, however, as Egyptologers hold, from the *black* soil of the Nile.

52. *like sheep*] See lxxvii. 20.

54. *even to this mountain*] Thus Ex. xv. 17, see note, and cf. *v.* 13. "This mountain" is probably the mountain of the sanctuary, Moriah; though even here Dr Kay and others hold that it may apply to the whole of Canaan, referring to Exodus, above quoted, and to Deut. xi. 11; Isai. xi. 9, lvii. 13: thus too Hupfeld. Ewald stands alone in referring the word to Shiloh.

57. *like a deceitful bow*] See Hos. vii. 16; and note on *v.* 9. The apostasy is here distinctly represented as the sin of the whole nation, not of one tribe.

58. *to jealousy*] Cf. Num. xxv. 11.

59. *Israel*] This is supposed by many critics to apply specially or exclusively to Ephraim, on account of the reference to Shiloh and to Judah in *vv.* 60, 68: but the guilt which brought on the punishment was national, and visited on the whole people.

60. *the tabernacle of Shiloh*] See the account of the establishment of the tabernacle by "the whole congregation of the children of Israel," Josh. xviii. 1. It was the national sanctuary throughout the period of the Judges; the forsaking here spoken of was accomplished or testified by the capture of the ark. The tabernacle itself appears to have been removed first to Nob, 1 S. xxi. 1, and then to Gibeon; see 1 K. iii. 4. From Jeremiah vii. 12, we learn that the sanctuary had been deserted, if not destroyed, whether by foreign enemies or otherwise, probably long before the prophet's time. This passage is quoted in the 'Christian Observer,' 1872, p. 261, as conclusive evidence of the identity of the tabernacle at Shiloh.

61. *his strength*] The ark of the covenant; see note on Ps. lxiii. 2. Thus too "glory" is associated with the ark; hence the name Ichabod, "the glory is departed from Israel,

62 He gave his people over also unto the sword; and was wroth with his inheritance.

63 The fire consumed their young men; and their maidens were not † Heb. praised. †given to marriage.

64 Their priests fell by the sword; and their widows made no lamentation.

65 Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep, *and* like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine.

66 And he smote his enemies in the hinder parts: he put them to a perpetual reproach.

67 Moreover he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim:

68 But chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Zion which he loved.

69 And he built his sanctuary like high *palaces*, like the earth which he hath †established for ever. † Heb. founded.

70 [r]He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds: [r] 1 Sam. 16. 11. 2 Sam. 7. 8.

71 From following [u](the ewes) great with young he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance. † Heb. From after. [u] 2 Sam. 5. 2. 1 Chron. 11. 2.

72 So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands.

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because the ark of God was taken," 1 S. iv. 21. There is no indication here of a special visitation on Ephraim. God was "wroth with his inheritance," *v.* 62, and the whole people were reduced to subjection under the Philistines.

62. *unto the sword*] First in the terrible overthrow, when 30,000 Israelites perished. 1 S. iv. 10.

63. *The fire*] This is generally understood to mean the fire of war, or the sword, as in Num. xxi. 28; Isai. xxvi. 11; Jer. xlviii. 45. The fire of divine wrath may be meant. See lxxix. 5, lxxxix. 46.

given to marriage] The expression "praised," as in the marg., refers to bridal songs, and such encomiums as we read in Ps. xlv. and in Song Sol. iv.

64. *and their widows*, &c.] Cf. Job xxvii. 15. The widow's heart broke, 1 S. iv. 22. The neglect of funeral rites marks the extremity of desolation.

65. *Then the Lord awaked*] See Pss. vii. 6, xxxv. 23, lxxiii. 20. The awakening marks the manifestation of divine power, sudden, unexpected, irresistible. See 1 S. xiv.

that shouteth] Cf. Isai. xlii. 13, 14. The cry of the warrior, after a long cessation from fighting, full of strength and fury, is thus vividly designated. The reader will remember the shout of Achilles, the turning point of the Iliad.

66. *in the hinder parts*] This is an unhappy rendering: the Hebrew means smote his enemies, driving them **backward**; thus Ps. xl. 14, and in every passage where the word occurs in descriptions of a defeat. The A. V. seems to countenance the Rabbinical tradition alluding to the plague of the Philistines.

67. *Moreover ... Joseph*] One result of the long series of victories by which God delivered His people from their oppressors was the final transfer of the sanctuary to Zion. The hegemony was transferred to Judah; the tabernacle of Joseph, that is of the tribe of Ephraim, ceased to be the centre of the national religion. If this psalm was composed, as the Inscription states, by Asaph, and doubtless for recitation in the sanctuary of Zion, it is impossible that such an event should have been unnoticed, nor, although the record must have been painful to the Ephraimites, is there any expression calculated to cause needless offence.

68. *which he loved*] See Ps. lxxxvii. 2, and cf. Ps. ii. 6. The proof of that love was the transfer of the ark to Zion. See 2 S. vi. 12—18, vii. 27—29.

69. *like high palaces*] Rather, "like the heights," sc. of heaven; thus Hupfeld, who compares Job xxi. 22, xxii. 12. The comparison with heaven seems far more appropriate than with earthly palaces, and is applicable to the tabernacle as the abode of the Lord. There does not appear to be a reference to the outward majesty of the temple, or to its stability, but to the promise of God made to David, 2 S. vii.

70. *He chose David*] See 1 S. xvi. 11, 12. In this great liturgical psalm the call of David necessarily takes its place as the climax of all blessings. During the king's life the record of his humble estate and calling has a special propriety. The abrupt conclusion is admitted by rationalists to imply that the psalm was written in David's time: see the note in the 'Christian Observer,' quoted above on *v.* 60.

71. *to feed Jacob*] See 2 S. vii. 7, 8.

PSALM LXXIX.

1 *The psalmist complaineth of the desolation of Jerusalem.* 8 *He prayeth for deliverance,* 13 *and promiseth thankfulness.*

A Psalm ‖ of Asaph.

‖ Or, *for Asaph.*

O GOD, the heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled; they have laid Jerusalem on heaps.

2 The dead bodies of thy servants have they given *to be* meat unto the fowls of the heaven, the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth.

3 Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem; and *there was* none to bury *them.*

4 [a]We are become a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and derision to them that are round about us. [a] Ps. 44. 13.

5 [b]How long, LORD? wilt thou be angry for ever? shall thy jealousy burn like fire? [b] Ps. 89. 46.

6 [c]Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen that have not known thee, and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon thy name. [c] Jer 10. 25.

PSALM LXXIX.

This psalm, which bears a near resemblance to the seventy-fourth, represents the temple desecrated, the city reduced to a heap of ruins, the people around Jerusalem massacred in numbers and unburied, multitudes led into captivity, and reserved for a cruel death. These indications do not exactly coincide with either of the two dates usually assumed by commentators. In the Chaldean invasion the temple was not merely desecrated, but burnt down, and utterly destroyed; in the Maccabean period the city was not reduced to a heap of stones. Both psalms may have been composed immediately after the plundering of the temple by Shishak, when the Psalmist would have before him the scenes so graphically described. We have no notice of destruction of buildings in Jerusalem at that time, but the Egyptian conquerors were not likely to leave the city without such marks of their presence. That many Hebrews were led into captivity on that special occasion is a fact attested by the monuments of Karnak; see note on Ps. lxxiv.

There are four strophes, the first (1—4), with four verses, the remainder of three each. The verses are somewhat longer than usual, with unequal members, a form well adapted to elegiac poetry.

1. *the heathen... inheritance*] Cf. lxxiv. 2; Lam. i. 10.

defiled] The word implies the actual presence of the enemy in the temple, but not its destruction; cf. Ps. lxxiv. 7. In the 5th year of Rehoboam Shishak took away the treasures of the house of the Lord. See 1 K. xiv. 25, 26, and 2 Chro. xii. 2—10. This description so far is equally applicable to the profanation of the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes.

laid Jerusalem on heaps] Or, "in ruins." The full records of the Syrian period leave no place for this destruction. From the very brief notices of Shishak's invasion, it is clear that the city was spared, but apparently after a siege, during which a considerable portion may have been laid in heaps by the formidable engines of the Egyptians; see Wilkinson, Vol. I. p. 390. The historical period, which so far agrees most fully with this description, is that of the Chaldeans. Cf. the prophecy in Mic. iii. 12.

2. *The dead bodies*] The passage is quoted, evidently as an old prophecy fulfilled in his own time, by the author of the Maccabees, 1 Macc. vii. 17; see note at end. The circumstance in itself supplies no indication of date: it was common to every foreign invasion. See Deut. xxviii. 26; Jer. vii. 33, xv. 3.

thy servants] Or "saints;" see note on Ps. xvi. 10; the term is generic, but implies personal piety.

3. *round about Jerusalem*] This seems to imply that the slaughter ceased when Jerusalem itself was occupied; a circumstance which does not suit the Chaldean invasion. The immense army of Shishak does not appear to have encountered any resistance when it entered the city; a fact which seems necessarily implied in the plundering of the temple, and in the servitude of the nation; see 2 Chro. xii. 7—9.

4. *our neighbours*] The word implies actual dwellers in and about the territory, such for instance as the descendants of the old inhabitants who had been reduced to subjection by David, and were employed, doubtless with little consideration, in the works of Solomon's reign. Their exultation at the humiliation of his successor is just what might be expected.

round about us] This applies to the neighbouring tribes and nations, Syrians, Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites whose prince Hadad was closely allied with the Egyptians, see 1 K. xi. 14—23.

5—7. Appeal to God, implying a long continuance of the calamity. The nation was in subjection to Shishak for some time; see 2 Chro. xii. 8.

7 For they have devoured Jacob,
and laid waste his dwelling place.
8 [d]O remember not against us
[‖]former iniquities: let thy tender mer-
cies speedily prevent us: for we are
brought very low.
9 Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name: and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name's sake.
10 Wherefore should the heathen say, Where *is* their God? let him be known among the heathen in our sight *by* the [†]revenging of the blood of thy servants *which is* shed.
11 Let the sighing of the prisoner come before thee; according to the greatness of [†]thy power [†]preserve thou those that are appointed to die;
12 And render unto our neighbours sevenfold into their bosom their reproach, wherewith they have reproached thee, O Lord.
13 So we thy people and sheep of thy pasture will give thee thanks for ever: we will shew forth thy praise [†]to all generations.

[d] Isai. 64. 9.
[‖] Or, *the iniquities of them that were before us.*
[†] Heb. *vengeance.*
[†] Heb. *thine arm.*
[†] Heb. *reserve the children of death.*
[†] Heb. *to generation and generation.*

PSALM LXXX.

1 *The psalmist in his prayer complaineth of the miseries of the church.* 8 *God's former favours are turned into judgments.* 14 *He prayeth for deliverance.*

To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim-Eduth, A Psalm [‖]of Asaph.

[‖] Or, *for Asaph.*

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7. *his dwelling place*] The word properly means a habitation of shepherds, caula; it is used of the Sanctuary, Exod. xv. 13; 2 S. xv. 25; but in this and most other passages it is understood by nearly all critics to denote "pasture," the pastoral district; thus Rosen., Hengst., Hupfeld, Perowne.

8. *for we are brought very low*] These words, though strong, are not strong enough for the destruction of the nation: the writer was evidently in his own land, then in lowly estate, as it would be under Shishak.

10. *Where is their God?*] The triumph over a nation was always regarded as a proof of the weakness, or absence, of its God: hence the force of the following appeal, the blood shed by the invader was that of Jehovah's servants.

11. *of the prisoner*] The monuments of Karnak shew that Shishak led numbers of the Jewish nobility into captivity, and that many were reserved for death as offerings to his god. The prisoners who were sent to Babylon were not massacred, Nebuchadnezzar slew his victims on the spot. It is observable that in no part of the psalm do we find a prayer for the general restoration of the nation, such as characterize all the productions of the later period.

appointed to die] Literally, "children of death." Cf. 1 S. xx. 31. Our version gives the meaning, though it loses the force of the original. The Hebrew idiom is best explained by Cremer, 'Biblische Gräcität,' p. 562.

12. *reproach*] Ps. lxxiv. 10, 18, 22.

13. *thy people*] Ps. lxxiv. 1.

The careful examination of this psalm by Himpel, 'Quartalschrift,' 1870, p. 432 ff., establishes the following points. 1. There is a close connection between this and the 74th psalm: thus Ps. lxxix. 5, "How long, Lord? wilt thou be angry for ever?" Cf. lxxiv. 1, 10. lxxix. 2 describes the evil which is feared in lxxiv. 19; compare also lxxix. 13, and lxxiv. 1. The lamentations refer to the slaughter of the people, the desecration or overthrow of the temple. 2. Both psalms are closely connected with Jeremiah (ch. x. 25), and a comparison of the passages leads to the conclusion that the prophet adopted the Psalmist's words, a point open to dispute, but well supported by Himpel. 3. The application of the psalms to the period of the Maccabees is not questioned, but the quotation of this psalm in 1 Macc. vii. 16, "according to the word which he wrote," clearly assumes its previous acceptance as a portion of Holy Writ; since the word "he" cannot refer to the subject of the preceding clause, viz. Alcimus the murderer; Eusebius supplies "Asaph," and the Syriac version "the prophet;" and it is certain that one or the other word was either expressed or understood by the author of that book.

Psalm LXXX.

The prayers in this psalm apply specially to the restoration of the kingdom of Israel. There is no special mention of Judah. It is evidently written while the temple is standing (note on *v.* 1), and the people to which the Psalmist belongs occupy their native land. The devastation is terrible, the vineyard is laid waste, the branches cut down and burnt, but the Psalmist relies on the continued favour of God to the man of His right hand, and anticipates a final deliverance. All these circumstances point either to the period immediately preceding the captivity of the ten tribes, or to the interval between that event and the Chaldean invasion, or shortly before that former event, Himpel, p. 461. It is, however, not improbable that it was composed with refer-

GIVE ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest *between* the cherubims, shine forth.

2 Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh stir up thy strength, and † come *and* save us.

† Heb. *come for salvation to us.*

3 Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

4 O LORD God of hosts, how long † wilt thou be angry against the prayer of thy people?

† Heb. *wilt thou smoke?*

5 Thou feedest them with the bread of tears; and givest them tears to drink in great measure.

6 Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbours: and our enemies laugh among themselves.

7 Turn us again, O God of hosts, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

8 Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it.

9 Thou preparedst *room* before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land.

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ence to the same events which gave occasion to the 74th and 79th psalms. The extreme beauty of the imagery, the grace and dignity of the style, remind the reader of the noblest productions of Asaph's school.

Köster observes that "the structure of this elegiac psalm has something quite peculiar. *vv.* 3, 7, 19 are a refrain, in which the predicates of God, which are concentrated in *v.* 4 (cf. Ps. lix. 5), increase gradually: and thus the strophes enclosed within the refrain are longer by degrees, consisting severally of three, four, and two of six verses. The two last verses form a distinct portion with the allegory of the vine, for which reason probably they are not separated by a refrain." This structure seems characteristic; see remarks on Ps. lxxviii.

Shoshannim] Ps. xlv.

1. The Psalmist grounds the appeal to God on His old relation to Israel, with express reference to the last blessing of Jacob, Gen. xlviii. 15, and on His continued presence in the Temple between the Cherubim. The prayer is for all Israel, but apparently with special regard to the ten tribes.

2. Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh are named together probably as children of Rachel (see Num. ii. 18—24, and x. 22—24); the Psalmist prays that God's power may be specially manifested in the salvation of those three tribes. This combination presents some difficulty, since Benjamin was united to the kingdom of Judah: but a large portion, including the cities Bethel, Gilgal and Jericho, belonged to the northern kingdom, and it is probable that the district was overrun, and the inhabitants led into captivity, by Shalmaneser. Shishak also captured several cities in the same district. This passage is conclusive against the Maccabean hypothesis.

3. *Turn us again*] This seemingly points to a restoration from captivity, but the expression is frequently used of a deliverance from any great calamity; see note on Job xlii. 10. In this first refrain we have the name Elohim, God; in verse 7, Elohim, God of hosts; in the 4th and last verses, O Lord God of hosts, a striking combination, which shews how much the Psalmist was guided by subjective feeling in the choice of the divine names, and how little dependence can be placed upon chronological assumptions based on such usage.

4. *O LORD God of hosts*] A form not common in the psalms, but occurring in lix. 5, lxxxiv. 8.

wilt thou be angry] Literally, "hast Thou smoked," a common metaphor for wrath; see Pss. xviii. 8, lxxiv. 1. The Psalmist uses the past tense because the wrath has already been long manifested; the A.V. gives the substantial meaning.

against the prayer] Lit. "with (*i.e. notwithstanding*) the prayer;" the anger continues, not excited, but as yet not appeased by prayer: thus Hupfeld.

5. *feedest them*] See Ps. xlii. 3.

in great measure] Literally, "a goblet;" the A.V. gives the sense. Cf. xlii. 3.

6. *our neighbours*] Here, as in lxxix. 4, the Psalmist probably alludes to the remnants of Gentile races scattered through Palestine ever ready to take part with Israel's enemies.

7. *O God of hosts*] The addition of "hosts" is equivalent to an expression of confidence in God's power.

8. *a vine out of Egypt*] This passage draws out all the force and beauty of the figure first applied to Joseph in the blessing of Jacob, to which the Psalmist evidently refers, "Joseph is a fruitful bough," &c. (Gen. xlix. 22). Compare Isai. v. 1—7, xxvii. 2—6; Jer. ii. 21, xii. 10; Ezek. xv. 6, xvii. 5.

planted it] The expression first occurs in its figurative meaning in Exod. xv. 17, to which the Psalmist probably refers. Cf. Ps. xliv. 2.

10 The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof *were like* †the goodly cedars.

† Heb. *the cedars of God.*

11 She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river.

12 Why hast thou *then* broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her?

13 The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it.

14 Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts: look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine;

15 And the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch *that* thou madest strong for thyself.

16 *It is* burned with fire, *it is* cut down: they perish at the rebuke of thy countenance.

17 Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man *whom* thou madest strong for thyself.

18 So will not we go back from thee: quicken us, and we will call upon thy name.

19 Turn us again, O LORD God of hosts, cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

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10. *goodly cedars*] Lit. "cedars of God." Objection is taken to the figure as hyperbolical, but the object of the Psalmist is to shew the more than natural growth of the nation. For the idiom cf. Gen. xxiii. 6.

11. *the river*] The Euphrates, the extreme limit of the Israelitish kingdom in its ideal extent, nearly realized under Solomon.

12. Compare Isai. v. 5.

13. *The boar ... the wild beast*] A general description of the invaders, not necessarily, or probably, of an individual. Cf. Jer. v. 6.

14. *Return, we beseech thee*] See *v.* 3.

15. Two words in this verse are doubtful, "vineyard" and "branch;" the former may be rendered "the plant," (see, however, Note below), but the latter in the original is "son," which may be equivalent to branch (as in Gen. xlix. 22, "Joseph is a fruitful bough, lit. *son*, בֵּן, whose בָּנוֹת, lit. *daughters*, *i.e.* branches run over the wall"), but more probably it is to be understood literally; the Psalmist leaves the metaphor, and points out its meaning. The vine which God plants is Israel His adopted child; thus "and have called my son out of Egypt," Hos. xi. 1. See also Exod. iv. 22.

16. *it is cut down*] The word is used specially of thorns cut down, and used as fuel; thus Isai. xxxiii. 12. Compare our Lord's words of fruitless branches of the vine, John xv. 6.

17. *the man of thy right hand*] *i.e.* the people of Israel, so called as delivered by God's power and strengthened for His special service: or there may be a reference to David, see Ps. lxxxix. 21. The application to the Messiah, which the Jewish interpreters recognized, rests upon the fact that He is the ideal and representative of the nation. What is partially true of the nation, is absolutely true of Him. See Luke i. 66.

18. *quicken us*] *i.e.* restore us to life, give us renewed life, Ps. lxxi. 20. The spiritual application of this psalm reaches the central and most vital truths of religion, the redemption of God's people by the Son of man, and their renovation by His Spirit.

19. *O LORD God of hosts*] The name of Jehovah, which recurs at the close of the psalm, as though the Psalmist felt that his prayer was accepted in virtue of the covenant, which that word represents.

NOTE on PSALM LXXX. 15.

The word גֶּפֶן, here rendered "vineyard," without authority, is generally taken to mean a plant, but the interpretation of the LXX. κατάρτισαι, Vulg. perfice, "establish," is adopted by Michaelis, with a slight modification, sc. "protect," from the Arabic *kanna;* thus too Hupfeld, who shews that an imperative is required, and that this verb explains the construction. The verse would then be rendered, "and protect what Thy hand planted, and the branch which Thou hast strengthened for thyself."

PSALM LXXXI.

1 *An exhortation to a solemn praising of God.* 4 *God challengeth that duty by reason of his benefits.* 8 *God, exhorting to obedience, complaineth of their disobedience, which proveth their own hurt.*

To the chief Musician upon Gittith, *A Psalm* †of Asaph.

† Or, *for Asaph.*

SING aloud unto God our strength: make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob.

2 Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery.

3 Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day.

4 For this *was* a statute for Israel, *and* a law of the God of Jacob.

5 This he ordained in Joseph *for* a testimony, when he went out ‖ through the land of Egypt: *where* I heard a language *that* I understood not.

‖ Or, *against.*

6 I removed his shoulder from the burden: his hands † were delivered from the pots.

† Heb. *passed away.*

7 Thou calledst in trouble, and I delivered thee; I answered thee in the secret place of thunder: I [a] proved thee at the waters of ‖ Meribah. Selah.

[a] Exod. 17. 6.

‖ Or, *strife.*

8 Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee: O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto me;

9 There shall no strange god be in thee; neither shalt thou worship any strange god.

10 I *am* the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.

11 But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me.

12 [b] So I gave them up ‖ unto their own hearts' lust: *and* they walked in their own counsels.

[b] Acts 14. 16.

‖ Or, *to the hardness of their hearts,* or, *imaginations.*

13 Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, *and* Israel had walked in my ways!

14 I should soon have subdued

PSALM LXXXI.

A psalm for public recitation at a festival, and, as the special mention of trumpets indicates, at the feast of Tabernacles on the 1st of Tisri. The rapid alternation of interlocutors, and the style, grave and energetic, are characteristic of Asaph.

Four strophes seem to be distinctly marked, *vv.* 1—3, 4—7, 8—10, 11 and 12, 13—16; presenting a scheme less symmetrical than is usual in Asaphic psalms, 3, 4, 3, 2, 4.

1. *Sing aloud*] Deut. xxxii. 43, where A.V. has "rejoice."

make a joyful noise] The word is specially used of the blare of trumpets, Lev. xxiii. 24, Num. xxix. 1; see Ps. xlvii. 1.

2. *the timbrel*] Exod. xv. 20.

3. *in the new moon*] Every new moon was celebrated both with sacrifices (Num. xxviii. 11) and with sound of trumpets, but the new moon of the seventh month, the sabbatic month, in which the great festival of Tabernacles was observed, was especially solemnized by blowing of trumpets (Num. xxix. 1); ancient and most modern commentators agree that this psalm was composed for recitation upon that day, which is called in Lev. xxiii. 24 "a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation."

our solemn feast day] The feast of Tabernacles was especially remarkable for its festive character, so that it was frequently called "the feast" absolutely. There was an interval of fifteen days between the new moon and its celebration, and this psalm may have been recited on both occasions.

5. *where I heard a language that I understood not*] Rather, omitting "where," **I heard a language I knew not.** This is generally understood to mean a foreign, barbarous language, and the interpretation is borne out by many similar passages (Ps. cxiv. 1; Deut. xxviii. 49; Isai. xxxiii. 19); but there appears good reason to adopt the sense pointed out by Hupfeld, "there I heard for the first time the voice of God, which I knew not, speaking on Sinai." The reference to that great manifestation seems better suited to the context, and introduces the following address of the Deity. Kay, "The lip of one I had not known then heard I," referring, as Delitzsch does, to the unknown significance of the name Jehovah.

6. *from the pots*] Or, **the basket,** sc. in which Egyptian bricklayers bore the clay for bricks (thus the LXX.): but the word means also earthen vessels, as in Job xli. 31.

7. *in the secret place of thunder*] The cloud by which the Almighty at once manifested and veiled His presence, before, during, and after the passage through the Red Sea. Exod. xiii. 21, xiv. 19, 24.

waters of Meribah] *i.e.* "of strife," but the word is used as a proper name. See Exod. xvii. 6, 7.

10. *open thy mouth wide*] See Ps. xxxvii. 4; Eph. iii. 20. The promise may include all wants spiritual and temporal, though it refers primarily to bodily sustenance.

12. *their own hearts' lust*] Or, "to the stubbornness of their hearts," Deut. xxix. 19.

counsels] The word is generally taken in the bad sense of human counsels apart from and opposed to the divine. Mic. vi. 16.

14. *soon*] Or, "in a little;" that would have been a sure, natural, and easy result.

their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries.

15 The haters of the LORD should have ‖†submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured for ever.

16 He should have fed them also †with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee.

‖ Or, *yielded feigned obedience.* † Heb. *lied.*

† Heb. *with the fat of wheat.*

PSALM LXXXII.

1 *The psalmist, having exhorted the judges,* 5 *and reproved their negligence,* 8 *prayeth God to judge.*

A Psalm ‖of Asaph.

‖ Or, *for Asaph.*

GOD standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods.

2 How long will ye judge unjustly, and [a]accept the persons of the wicked? Selah.

[a] Deut. 1. 17.

3 †Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy.

† Heb. *Judge.*

4 [b]Deliver the poor and needy: rid *them* out of the hand of the wicked.

[b] Prov. 24. 11.

5 They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are †out of course.

† Heb. *moved.*

6 [c]I have said, Ye *are* gods; and all of you *are* children of the most High.

[c] John 10. 34.

7 But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.

8 Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations.

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15. *have submitted*] See marg., and note on Ps. xviii. 44.

16. Comp. Deut. xxxii. 13, 14; Job xxix. 6.

PSALM LXXXII.

Asaph denounces the injustice, corruption, and ignorance of the judges of Israel, and threatens them with destruction. In the first verse he represents the Almighty as sitting in judgment, in the last he calls on Him to judge the earth. The psalm has bold and remarkable expressions, and the style is pure, compact, and vigorous, but there are no certain indications of date. It may have been written under one of the kings of Judah, either by the elder Asaph at a period of general corruption, as in the reign of Rehoboam; or by a descendant bearing the same name, on the eve of a vigorous reformation, such as that ushered in by Asa, and accomplished by Jehoshaphat; see 2 Chro. xv. 8—19, xix. 4—11.

The division into two parts, each of four verses, is distinctly marked; but the strophes are irregular and somewhat abrupt, in accordance with the general tone of the psalm.

1. *In the congregation of the mighty*] Rather, **In the assembly of El**, *i.e.* of the Almighty, not, as our A.V. implies, in the congregation of the princes of the earth. By "assembly of El" must be understood the assembly called by the supreme God; it consists of beings called here, as elsewhere, Elohim in a subordinate sense, as partakers of a divine nature.

he judgeth among the gods] A name which here seems to designate the angels; see 1 K. xxii. 19; 2 Chro. xviii. 18, and Job i. 6; Dan. vii. 9, 10. Two explanations are generally given; each open to grave objections doctrinal and exegetical. The one assumes that the mighty and "the gods" are earthly judges (see Jehoshaphat's charge, 2 Chro. xix); the other that the address which follows is spoken by God Himself, and directed against the angels put in charge of the earth. The scriptural and most rational account appears to be that in this first verse the Psalmist represents God as holding a court of judgment in heaven surrounded by the divine ministers who will execute His behests; see 1 K. xxii. 19; Job i. 6. This is a more lively and poetical introduction than an appeal to the God of judgment, though equivalent to such an appeal in practical significance.

2. This and the rest of the psalm is addressed by Asaph, in the name of the God of judgment, to the unrighteous judges of Israel. The evils are those denounced by all the prophets. "Accept the persons," a common expression for undue partiality; see Ex. xxiii. 2; Lev. xix. 15; Deut. i. 17; James ii. 1.

3. *Defend*] Or, "judge," as in the marg.; cf. Ps. x. 14; Job xxix. 12.

4. *rid*] Or, "deliver," as in Prov. xxiv. 11, 12.

5. *They know not, neither will they understand*] Ps. xiv. 4, liii. 4; cf. Mic. iii. 1.

they walk on in darkness] Prov. ii. 13.

The last clause should be rendered, "All the foundations of the earth **are shaken**;" a similar expression in Ps. xi. 3 refers to the disturbance of the fundamental principles on which the administration of justice rests.

6. *I have said*] The meaning appears to be, "I," *i.e.* the Psalmist, "I, for my part, said, Ye are Gods, and sons of the Almighty, all of you," representatives of God, sharing in a peculiar sense His very attributes. The name of God in this sense is certainly attributed to earthly judges (Ex. xxi. 6; 1 Sam. ii.

PSALM LXXXIII.

1 A complaint to God of the enemies' conspiracies. 9 A prayer against them that oppress the church.

A Song *or* Psalm ‖ of Asaph.

‖ Or, *for Asaph.*

KEEP not thou silence, O God: hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God.

2 For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult: and they that hate thee have lifted up the head.

3 They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones.

4 They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from *being* a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.

5 For they have consulted together with one † consent: they are confederate against thee: † Heb. *heart.*

6 The tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; of Moab, and the Hagarenes;

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25), and it is so used by our Lord (see ref.), who quotes the passage to prove that the usage is not blasphemous. Hupfeld, who disregards *that* authority, supposes that God is thus addressing the angels, and threatening them with *death* (privation of immortality) in the following verse. The Psalmist expresses the profound reverence entertained by Israelites, and justified by the divine law, towards the vicegerents and representatives of God on earth.

children of the most High] See Ps. lxxxix. 27.

7. *like men*] Literally, **like Adam**, which may either mean share the common lot of mortality, or, with a more pointed reference, like Adam when he violated the conditions on which he held life; cf. Job xxxi. 33; Hos. vi. 7.

of the princes] The princes who had been cut off as enemies of God, probably with special allusion (as in the following psalm, *v.* 11) to the Midianitish princes: two examples are thus held up—the one of Adam, the son of God in a special sense by creation, who died for disobedience, and the other of sinners cut off in their antagonism to God.

8. *shalt inherit*] Or, "art Lord." The word means that all nations are actually the heritage of the God of Israel, He is the Lord and Judge of the whole earth (thus Luther, quoted by Hupfeld, *bist Erbherr*); hence the force of the appeal, as in Gen. xviii. 25. This verse, however, may with perfect propriety be understood to refer to the personal manifestation of God in Christ.

PSALM LXXXIII.

This psalm describes a powerful confederation against the kingdom, of which the principal leaders are Edom, Moab, Ammon, certain Arabian tribes, supported by the Philistines, Tyrians, and Assyrians. The mention of Amalek proves that the psalm belongs to the period before the captivity, since the Amalekites were destroyed by the Simeonites before that time. Nearly all ancient and many modern commentators (Tholuck, De Wette, Hengstenberg, Delitzsch, Himpel, Kay) hold that the confederacy of the Moabites and Ammonites and others, described in 2 Chro. xx. 5—12, gave occasion to the psalm. The great terror of Jehoshaphat and the people, the express mention of Mount Seir, and the result brought about by a division between the incongruous elements, confirm this view; nor is it at all impossible that the psalm may have been written by Jahaziel, "a Levite of the sons of Asaph," who was moved by the Spirit of God to promise a complete deliverance, 2 Chro. xx. 14—17. The mention of the Assyrians, not as leaders, but as encouragers, of the confederacy of the Philistines and Tyrians, will be considered in the notes. We find the Edomites, Philistines, and Arabians active in hostility in the reign of Jehoshaphat's successor.

The division is marked by Selah: the strophes have each four verses, except the last, which has six, expanding the leading thought.

2. *lifted up the head*] See Judg. viii. 28. The expression in both passages denotes a revolt; see the next note.

3. *crafty counsel*] The word implies secrecy. The movement originated among people partially or wholly subject to Judah.

4. *let us cut them off from being a nation*] Cf. 2 Chro. xx. 11, and comp. Jer. xxxi. 36; John xi. 48.

6. *The tabernacles of Edom*] The nomad tribes of Edom: they are named as leaders in the passage of Chronicles, quoted in the preceding note, under the designation of Mount Seir, *v.* 10. The Ishmaelites occupied, according to Gen. xxv. 18, the districts between Yemen and Assyria. They are not mentioned expressly by the Chronicler, who speaks (*v.* 1) in general terms of "others beside the Ammonites."

Hagarenes] "They dwell in their tents throughout all the land from east of Gilead" to the Persian Gulf; see 1 Chro. v. 10, and *vv.* 18—22. That account explains the reason both of the enmity of the Hagarenes (who had been expelled by the Reubenites in the time of Saul), and of the subordinate position assigned to them in this passage.

7 Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek; the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre;

8 Assur also is joined with them: †they have holpen the children of Lot. Selah.

† Heb. *they have been an arm to the children of Lot.*

9 Do unto them as *unto* the [a]Midianites; as *to* [b]Sisera, as *to* Jabin, at the brook of Kison:

[a] Judges 7. 22.
[b] Judges 4. 15, 24.

10 *Which* perished at En-dor: they became *as* dung for the earth.

11 Make their nobles like [c]Oreb, and like Zeeb: yea, all their princes as Zebah, and as Zalmunna:

[c] Judges 7. 25. & 8. 21.

12 Who said, Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession.

13 O my God, make them like a wheel; as the stubble before the wind.

14 As the fire burneth a wood, and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire;

15 So persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm.

16 Fill their faces with shame; that they may seek thy name, O LORD.

17 Let them be confounded and troubled for ever; yea, let them be put to shame, and perish:

18 That *men* may know that thou, whose name alone *is* JEHOVAH, *art* the most high over all the earth.

PSALM LXXXIV.

1 *The prophet, longing for the communion of the sanctuary,* 4 *sheweth how blessed they are that dwell therein.* 8 *He prayeth to be restored unto it.*

To the chief Musician upon Gittith, A Psalm ‖for the sons of Korah.

‖ Or, *of.*

HOW amiable *are* thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts!

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7. *Gebal*] A tract of Edom south of the Dead Sea. See Josh. xiii. 5; Ezek. xxvii. 9.

Philistines and Tyrians are named by Amos, i. 6, 9, as allies of Edom in wars against Israel. The hostility of the latter people was felt as peculiarly cruel, on account of the old "brotherly covenant" with the house of David. It is probable that on this occasion they sent reinforcements.

8. *Assur*] Assur is mentioned as supporting the confederacy, not as taking a leading position; their support of the Moabites and Ammonites is evidently regarded by the Psalmist as a remarkable event. It is the first indication of any movement of the Assyrian power in that direction. The incidental notice shews that as yet that great nation had not attracted the special attention of the Israelites. The mention of Assur is conclusive against the hypothesis of the Maccabean date.

they have holpen] Lit. "been an arm," implies that they were auxiliaries, not leaders, on this occasion.

9. The allusion to the Midianites has a peculiar fitness in reference to an expected invasion by vast hordes of nomad tribes: for the history see Judg. iv. v. and vii.

11. *Make their nobles*] Oreb and Zeeb were princes, *i.e.* nobles, or military commanders; Zebah and Zalmunna kings or sheikhs of Midianitish nations; see note on Judg. viii. 12.

12. *the houses of God*] Or, "the dwellings of God," (as in Ps. xxiii. 2, pastures, or homesteads); the districts which are the special heritage of God's people. The war had not, as our A.V. would imply, any special religious character.

13. *wheel*] The translation is literal, but the word means **whirlwind**, or, rather, the sand caught up and hurled along by the whirlwind; thus Isai. xvii. 13; an admirable figure of the flight of a panic-stricken army.

stubble] Ps. i. 4; Job xiii. 25; Isai. v. 24.

14. Or, **As fire consumeth a forest, and as flame burneth mountains**: the last words represent the rapid progress of flame through the brushwood on mountain-sides; cf. Deut. xxxii. 22, and the two expressions τρόχος and ὕλη in James iii. 5, 6.

15. *persecute...tempest*] Job ix. 27, xxi. 18.

16. *with shame*] The ignominy of a frustrated attempt. Job x. 15.

that they may seek thy name] This is a feeling altogether peculiar to God's people. The object of all the judgments which the true prophet desires is to bring all nations into subjection to God. Their calamities will be converted into blessings, unless they persist in rebellion: in that case the curses denounced in the last verse must be accomplished. Their knowledge will but seal their condemnation; cf. Pss. lix. 13, lxxxvi. 10, and the close of xviii.

18. *the most high*] Comp. the prayer of Jehoshaphat, 2 Chro. xx. 6.

PSALM LXXXIV.

This introduces another set of psalms by the sons of Korah, all of them closely resembling those in the preceding book, which are attributed to the same authors. Like them (see especially xlii.) it describes the longing of the Psalmist for the solemnities of the temple-service; but it is fuller of hope, and appears to have been written when he contemplated a

2 My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

3 Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, *even* thine altars, O LORD of hosts, my King, and my God.

4 Blessed *are* they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah.

5 Blessed *is* the man whose strength *is* in thee; in whose heart *are* the ways *of them*.

6 *Who* passing through the valley ‖of Baca make it a well; the rain also †filleth the pools.

‖ Or, *of mulberry trees make him a well*, &c.

7 They go ‖from strength to strength, *every one of them* in Zion appeareth before God.

† Heb. *covereth.*

8 O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah.

‖ Or, *from company to company.*

9 Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed.

10 For a day in thy courts *is* better than a thousand. †I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my

† Heb. *I would choose rather to sit at the threshold.*

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speedy restoration to his old avocations. It may belong to the period immediately after the suppression of Absalom's rebellion; or, possibly, to some other period under the kings of Judah; certainly before the captivity, since the national sanctuary was standing.

The division of the psalm into three equal parts, each of four lines, is distinctly marked by Selah, *vv.* 4, 8.

1. *thy tabernacles*] Or, "Thy dwellings;" *i.e.* the sanctuary, whether tabernacle or temple; probably the former; see note on Ps. xliii. 3, and cf. cxxxii. 7.

2. *My soul longeth*] Cf. Pss. xlii. 1, 2, lxiii. 1. Dr Kay observes, The LXX. have *ἐπιποθεῖ*, the word used by St Paul of the spirit's longing for "the house from heaven," 2 Cor. v. 2.

fainteth] Job xix. 27, where A.V. has "be consumed;" Ps. lxxiii. 26, "faileth:" the same word is used of the intense longing of David to see Absalom, 2 Sam. xiii. 39.

living God] See Ps. xlii. 2; that was the real object of the longing, the realization of God's presence.

3. *the sparrow*] The Psalmist feels like a wandering bird, homeless, until he finds a refuge in God's house. The latter half of the verse "even Thine altars," may be taken, as by our A.V., in apposition to "house;" but it appears rather to be an exclamation, as though the Psalmist would say "The birds have their houses; my refuge and home, the place in which my heart finds all its comfort, is the altar of God."

my King] Ps. v. 2, where see note.

5. The latter clause is rather obscure, literally "ways in their heart," but the meaning appears to be, Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee, in whose heart are the ways to Jerusalem, blessed are they whose hearts are full of one thought, that they are drawing nearer to God's house. This verse suggested Herder's view, that the psalm was specially composed for pilgrims to the Holy City; but it is most appropriate in the mouth of a Levite on his way to the temple.

6. The general meaning is clear; "They whose strength is God, and whose heart is fixed on their journey to His house, passing through the dreariest valley find wells of spiritual comfort;" but the construction is difficult. The valley of Baca is either a proper name (Baca having an ambiguous sense, "mulberry-tree," or "balsam," or "weeping"), or more probably it means that any valley through which they pass, however dreary and desolate, naturally a very vale of bitter weeping, becomes to them a sweet fountain. The verse may be rendered "Passing through the valley of weeping they make it a fountain, the rain also fills it with blessing." They have an inward spring of joy which makes it a place of refreshment, for the favour of God falls on it like **the early rain**, *i.e.* the autumnal rain of seed-time. In favour of the rendering "mulberry-tree," or "balsam," for each of which there is good authority, it is to be observed that they grow in dry places. Thus Ew., Köster, and Hupfeld.

the rain also filleth the pools] Or, **the early rain clothes it with blessings**: thus nearly all commentators. Dr Kay refers to Ezek. xxxiv. 26; and observes that in 2 Chro. xx. 26, Jehoshaphat and the people praised God in the valley of *Berachah*, or "blessing."

7. *They go from strength to strength*] The journey instead of exhausting increases their powers.

9. *our shield*] An expression appropriate to David (cf. Pss. iii. 3, xxviii. 7, lix. 11). See also Gen. xv. 1.

thine anointed] *i.e.* The king, on whose prosperity depends that of the people: this is equally appropriate to David and to his successors on the throne: it has its highest meaning in the mouth of the Christian, who cares only to be seen and known in Christ.

God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

11 For the LORD God *is* a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and
[a] Ps. 34. 9, 10. glory: [a]no good *thing* will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.
[b] Ps. 2. 12. 12 O LORD of hosts, [b]blessed *is* the man that trusteth in thee.

PSALM LXXXV.

1 *The psalmist, out of the experience of former mercies, prayeth for the continuance thereof.* 8 *He promiseth to wait thereon, out of confidence of God's goodness.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm [1]for the sons of Korah.

[1] Or, *of.*

[1] Or, *well pleased.*

LORD, thou hast been [1]favourable unto thy land: thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob.
[a] Ps. 32. 1. 2 [a]Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin. Selah.

3 Thou hast taken away all thy wrath: [1]thou hast turned *thyself* from the fierceness of thine anger.

[1] Or, *thou hast turned thine anger from waxing hot.*

4 Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger toward us to cease.

5 Wilt thou be angry with us for ever? wilt thou draw out thine anger to all generations?

6 Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?

7 Shew us thy mercy, O LORD, and grant us thy salvation.

8 I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly.

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10. *a thousand*] *i.e.* any number elsewhere.

a doorkeeper] Or, "lie on the threshold," *i.e.* as a servant of the lowest order, but still ministering to the temple: the Korahites were *doorkeepers* in the temple, 1 Chro. xxvi. 13—19.

11. *a sun*] The only passage where God is directly so called, but the thought is frequently suggested, as in Isai. lx. 19; Mal. iv. 2; Rev. xxi. 23; see also Ps. xxvii. 1.

PSALM LXXXV.

The psalm begins with thanksgiving for deliverance and forgiveness of sin (1—5), and then suddenly turns to prayer for mercy and salvation (4—7): the concluding portion contains the divine promise of all spiritual and temporal blessings. The rapid alternations of thought and feeling are best accounted for on the supposition that the psalm was composed for public recitation shortly after the restoration of the people from captivity, when gratitude for that blessing was blended with a strong sense of their actual wants and sufferings, feelings which are then absorbed by a sure hope of the future accomplishment of all God's purposes for the redemption and salvation of Israel: the character of the concluding portion is essentially Messianic. Like other psalms attributed to the sons of Korah, this bears a striking resemblance to the latter portion of Isaiah.

It may however be observed that the psalm would be perfectly suitable to a period of deliverance, and very specially to the cessation of the servitude to Egypt, when Rehoboam humbled himself before God. 2 Chro. xii. 12.

The structure is peculiar, two strophes of six lines, with an intervening ejaculation, *v.* 7.

1. *brought back the captivity*] This expression does not prove that the psalm was written after the captivity, for it is used in many passages which describe deliverance from calamity (see note on Job xlii. 10); but it applies naturally to that period.

3. *all thy wrath*] Cf. 2 Chro. xii. 7.

turned thyself] This is nearer to the original than the marginal version, and expresses the exact meaning.

4. *Turn us*, &c.] The rapid and even abrupt change of thought seems to indicate a responsive or alternate recitation; while one half of the singers, representing the people, dwell wholly on the indications of grace and pardon, the other directs the thought to the need of a deep spiritual change in the recipients, which alone can secure the continuance and completion of God's gracious purposes. Such alternations are far from uncommon in the psalms. This portion of the psalm implies that the people were in a state of great distress and weakness, such as is described in Ezra and Nehemiah, and must have followed the Egyptian invasion under Rehoboam. The whole tone of this address is specially suitable to that time; compare *vv.* 5, 6 with Pss. lxxiv. 1, and lxxix. 5.

8. *I will hear*] The Psalmist, as is usual in prophetic writings (see Habakkuk ii. 1), represents himself as waiting for a divine answer to the prayers just offered: he then gives the purport of the answer as it is apprehended by his spirit.

unto his people, and to his saints] Compare the whole tenour of the pleading in Ps. lxxxix. 15—17.

to folly] such as that which brought on the visitation. The expression specially

9 Surely his salvation *is* nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land.

10 Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed *each other*.

11 Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

12 Yea, the LORD shall give *that which is* good; and our land shall yield her increase.

13 Righteousness shall go before him; and shall set *us* in the way of his steps.

PSALM LXXXVI.

1 *David strengtheneth his prayer by the conscience of his religion,* 5 *by the goodness and power of God.* 11 *He desireth the continuance of former grace.* 14 *Complaining of the proud, he craveth some token of God's goodness.*

[J] Or, *A Prayer, being a Psalm of David.*

[J] A Prayer of David.

BOW down thine ear, O LORD, hear me: for I *am* poor and needy.

2 Preserve my soul; for I *am* [I] holy: O thou my God, save thy servant that trusteth in thee.

[I] Or, *one whom thou favourest.*

3 Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto thee [I] daily.

[I] Or, *all the day.*

4 Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

5 [a] For thou, Lord, *art* good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.

[a] Joel 2. 13.

6 Give ear, O LORD, unto my prayer; and attend to the voice of my supplications.

7 In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee: for thou wilt answer me.

8 Among the gods *there is* none

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denotes presumptuous folly, that which is the result of prosperity and luxury; see the account of Rehoboam and the princes, in 2 Chro. xi. 23, and xii. 1.

10. *Mercy and truth*] See lxxxix. 14. The adaptation of this promise to the work of Christ is obvious; all such promises have an ideal or a Messianic character, partly apprehended by the prophetic spirit, and distinctly explained by the event. In the enumeration of graces the inner and eternal harmony of divine attributes, which in their partial manifestation appear, if not opposed, yet diverse, is represented as perfectly developed; a consummation which appertains entirely to the manifestation of God in Christ.

11. *Truth*] The meaning appears to be, the result of God's faithfulness to his covenant of grace will be abundance of the fruits of righteousness; in the outward sense, temporal prosperity, in the inner sense (which if not present to the Psalmist's mind, is involved in the divine promise), the spiritual gifts and graces which belong to the kingdom of God.

righteousness shall look down from heaven] Compare Isai. xlv. 8.

13. *Righteousness shall go before him*] Isai. lviii. 8.

and shall set us in the way of his steps] Lit. "and shall make His steps a way:" the meaning appears to be that righteousness, preparing the way for the restoration of the Lord's favour, will guide the people in the way marked out by His footsteps, the indications of His will. The personification of the attributes of God, Mercy, Truth and Righteousness, is a characteristic of the 89th psalm; see *vv.* 8, 14.

PSALM LXXXVI.

This is called a psalm of David in the inscription, but the expression does not always mean authorship, and in this instance critics of very different schools (Delitzsch, Hupfeld and Hengstenberg) generally agree that we have the production of another author, probably an adaptation of the Davidic psalmody to liturgical usage. There is, however, no certain indication of a later period either in the subject-matter or the style; Dr Kay accepts it as a psalm of David, and Köster admits this to be very probable.

The structure resembles that of the preceding Korahite psalm; two strophes each of seven verses, with an intervening strophe (8—10) of three unequal verses.

1. *Bow down*, &c.] Common expressions in Davidic psalms; see Pss. xvii. 6, xxxi. 2, &c.

I am poor and needy] Pss. xl. 17, lxx. 5; see also xxxv. 10, xxxvii. 14.

2. *I am holy*] The Hebrew word is equivalent to "saint" in the New Testament (see note on Ps. l. 5); but with this difference, that ἅγιος in the New Testament is never used of one individual Christian; here it simply expresses the Psalmist's conviction that he is one of God's people, a child of grace.

4. *lift up my soul*] Ps. xxv. 1.

8. *Among the gods*] The expression is taken from Exod. xv. 11, and is frequently

like unto thee, O Lord; [b]neither *are* *there any works* like unto thy works.

9 All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name.

10 For thou *art* great, and doest wondrous things: [c]thou *art* God alone.

11 [d]Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.

12 I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore.

13 For great *is* thy mercy toward me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest ‖hell.

14 O God, the proud are risen against me, and the assemblies of †violent *men* have sought after my soul; and have not set thee before them.

15 [e]But thou, O Lord, *art* a God full of compassion, and gracious, long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.

16 O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me; give thy strength unto thy servant, and save the son of thine handmaid.

17 Shew me a token for good; that they which hate me may see *it*, and be ashamed: because thou, LORD, hast holpen me, and comforted me.

PSALM LXXXVII.

1 *The nature and glory of the church.* 4 *The increase, honour, and comfort of the members thereof.*

A Psalm *or* Song ‖for the sons of Korah.

HIS foundation *is* in the holy mountains.

2 The LORD loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.

[b] Deut. 3. 24.
[c] Deut. 6. 4. & 32. 39. Isai. 37. 16. & 44. 6. Mark 12. 29. 1 Cor. 8. 4. Ephes. 4. 6.
[d] Ps. 25. 4. & 119. 33.
‖ Or, *grave.*
† Heb. *terrible.*
[e] Exod. 34. 6. Numb. 14. 18. Ps. 103. 8. & 130. 4. & 145. 8.
‖ Or, *of.*

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repeated or imitated in the psalms, *e.g.* lxxxix. 6, lxxi. 19, lxxvii. 13, xcv. 3.

9. *All nations*] See note on Ps. xxii. 31. The Psalmist's belief in the future conversion of the heathen rests on two grounds, the creation of man by God, and the manifestations of His power.

11. *unite my heart*] A beautiful prayer which includes singleness of heart, a heart having no object but God, and a complete unison in all its powers and aspirations. Compare Jer. xxxii. 39, and Deut. vi. 5, x. 12.

13. *from the lowest hell*] Or, **from hell beneath**, the original "Sheol" means here as elsewhere the abode of the departed, which is always represented as subterranean, doubtless with special reference to the buried body, though the word is not (as our marg. makes it) equivalent to the grave. The thanksgiving refers to deliverance from some great danger. See note on Ps. xvi. 10.

14. *the proud . . . . violent*] Better than "the terrible" in the margin.

15. The Psalmist appeals to God's own declaration in Exod. xxxiv. 6. Compare Num. xiv. 18, Joel ii. 13, also Jonah iv. 2.

16. *the son of thine handmaid*] The expression doubtless implies that the Psalmist, like Timothy, owed his first religious impressions and training to his mother's care; it may also shew that the ground of his hope is that from childhood he has belonged to God's own family, His servant by birth.

17. *a token*] A proof of divine favour, not necessarily, or indeed probably, a miraculous intervention, but help and comfort.

PSALM LXXXVII.

The Messianic character of this beautiful psalm, which declares the nature and glory of the Church, and the increase, honour, and comfort of the members thereof, is recognized by all modern commentators. It bears a close resemblance to the prophecies of Isaiah which describe the future conversion of the bitterest enemies of Zion. See ch. ii. 2—4, xi. 10, xviii. xix. 23—25, xx. and xxiii. Hence it has been referred, with great probability, to the time of Hezekiah, but the date is uncertain; it can scarcely have been written after the return from Babylon. See notes on *v.* 1.

The division into two strophes is marked by Selah, *vv.* 3, 6; with an epiphonema, or ejaculatory verse at the close.

1. The glory of Zion is that God hath founded it, and sanctified the mountains on which it is built by His presence. Hupfeld alters the construction slightly, and reads, "Jehovah loveth His foundation on the holy mountains."

the holy mountains] This applies to the whole city of Jerusalem, which was built on several distinct heights.

2. *the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob*] This clause evidently implies a comparison between Zion and other places, where God had specially manifested Himself, or where the ark had rested, and it seems consequently to belong to an early period,

3 Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Selah.

4 I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me: behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia; this *man* was born there.

5 And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her.

6 The LORD shall count, when he writeth up the people, *that* this *man* was born there. Selah.

7 As well the singers as the players on instruments *shall be there:* all my springs *are* in thee.

PSALM LXXXVIII.

A prayer containing a grievous complaint.

A Song *or* Psalm ‖for the sons of Korah, to the chief Musician upon Mahalath Leannoth, ‖Maschil of Heman the Ezrahite.

‖ Or, *of.*

‖ Or, A Psalm *of Heman the Ezrahite, giving instruction.*

O LORD God of my salvation, I have cried day *and* night before thee:

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before the overthrow of Israel, and the old sanctuaries of Shiloh and Bethel. See Ps. lxxviii. 60, 67.

3. *Glorious things*] The Psalmist refers either to the old promises and predictions of the eternal duration and future glory of the Holy City, or more probably to the declaration of the Almighty in the following verses.

4. These are the words of the Almighty speaking by the Psalmist. Our A. V. obscures the meaning. The passage should be rendered:

I will name Rahab and Babylon among them that know me.
Behold Philistia and Tyre, with Cush:
This man was born there.

That is, God will bring about the entire conversion of the oldest and most bitter enemies of Israel, and count them among His own people, who know Him, and are known of Him: of each converted individual, descendant though he be of the accursed Ham, God will say, "this man is born in Zion, admitted to all the privileges of the children of Israel." This declaration is one of the strongest found in the prophetical writings. It does not speak of the subjugation, much less of the overthrow, of the enemies of Zion, but of their free admission to every blessing upon their conversion. It is satisfactory that this interpretation is given by Hupfeld. Rahab, as usual, is equivalent to Egypt. The mention of Babylon may point to a time after the exile; but that city must previously have been well known to the Psalmist as the stronghold of idolatry; and the captivity of Judah was predicted by Isaiah, ch. xxxix. 6, and by Micah, iv. 10.

5. *And of Zion*] Or, **And to Zion.** The Psalmist represents the Almighty as presenting every convert to the holy city, and saying, "This and this, one and all, belong to thee, every one is thy own child." Such, in fact, is the exact language of God to the Church, the true Zion, in which alone promises and predictions have an adequate and perfect fulfilment.

shall establish her] This promise secures the perpetuity of the Church after it has become the home or mother of the converted Gentiles.

6. *when he writeth up*] Cf. Exod. xxxii. 32; Ps. lxix. 28; Phil. iv. 3. This is a repetition of the preceding promise: it would seem to be needed to remove all shadow of doubt. God is represented as holding a general census of the Gentile world, and declaring of each individual, who is admitted into covenant, "This man is a true child of Zion, the birthright is become his."

7. This verse seems to express the joy of the converted Gentiles, who are represented as coming in a procession with singing and choral dancing unto Zion, and there one and all exclaiming "All my fresh springs, *i.e.* all sources of life and joy, are in thee."

the players on instruments] Or, "dancers;" the words may be rendered, "And singers with dancers (will say), All my springs are in thee."

PSALM LXXXVIII.

The Bible has no poem which represents personal anguish in language more utterly desponding than this psalm, attributed in the inscription to Heman the Ezrahite. There is one word of trust, inseparable from inward hopefulness, in the beginning; the Psalmist knows that the Lord is the God of his salvation; but that word occurs but once, and finds no echo in the succeeding strains. Death is nigh at hand (3), all strength exhausted (4); as one already occupying the grave (5) the sufferer lies in darkness, overwhelmed by God's wrath (6); forsaken of all friends, an object of loathing to them, shut up in prison (8), he is still praying, urgently and without ceasing (9 and 13), yet finds no response; from his youth ever on the point of death, distracted by the terrors of God, crushed by His fierce wrath, he lies now without lover or friend, with but one acquaintance left, even the darkness of Sheol.

It has been supposed (by Kimchi and Rosenmüller) that the sufferings of the nation

2 Let my prayer come before thee:
incline thine ear unto my cry;
3 For my soul is full of troubles:
and my life draweth nigh unto the
grave.
4 I am counted with them that go
down into the pit: I am as a man
that hath no strength:
5 Free among the dead, like the
slain that lie in the grave, whom thou
rememberest no more: and they are
cut off [1] from thy hand.

[1] Or, *by thy hand.*

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in exile are represented; but the traits are strictly personal; hence some have suggested that Uzziah, smitten with leprosy (see note on *v.* 5), or Hezekiah in his mortal sickness, may have been the author; but some expressions (see *v.* 15) are not applicable to either of these princes, or to Jeremiah, whose name has also been suggested. We have the portraiture of an individual, highly gifted, but subjected to every affliction which can try a faithful servant of God.

Heman is mentioned in 1 K. iv. 31, as a contemporary of Solomon, remarkable for wisdom, in conjunction with Ethan the Ezrahite. Both names are borne also by Levites, who, together with Asaph, were "set over the service of song" in the sanctuary by David, 1 Chro. vi. 33—44: whether Heman, a Kohathite, and Ethan, a Merarite, could also be called Ezrahites, is questioned, but Levites in some instances, as in that of Elkanah (1 S. i. 1), from whom Heman was descended, took the name of the district in which they settled, probably also of the family into which they were adopted, and the assumption of such a change of designation in the case of Heman and Ethan seems far more probable than that both should have borne the same names with distinguished contemporaries.

The supposition that this psalm was written within a few years after the death of Solomon is in itself probable, and accepted by many critics, *e.g.* Kay, Delitzsch, Moll. It was a period of severe trial to the sons of Korah; the disruption of the kingdom, the faithlessness of Rehoboam (2 Chro. xii. 1), followed by the invasion of Shishak, and the total, though temporary, subjection of all Judæa (Chro. l. c. *v.* 8), might well give intensity to anguish connected, as it would seem, with personal and long-continued affliction. The familiarity, moreover, of the writer with the book of Job, (so striking that Delitzsch would even suggest that he may have been its true author,) though shared by other Psalmists, is peculiarly characteristic of the Solomonian period. Some critics hold that this and the following psalm were written at the same time, which is very probable, and also that they were intended to be recited in succession; a supposition which appears untenable, considering the difference not merely of tone but of subject-matter, the one dealing with national events, the other with strictly personal misery.

The structure of the psalm is irregular, without the relief of distinct strophic change, a slow unbroken wail, the monotony of woe. The divisions, marked by Selah, *vv.* 7 and 10, are unequal.

for the sons of Korah] The double inscription may possibly be referred to a tradition of doubtful authority. If correct, it may be assumed that the sons of Korah were entrusted with the recitation of the psalm.

Mahalath Leannoth] On Machalath, see Ps. liii.

Leannoth] *i. e.* "for singing," or "for humbling." The probable meaning is, a psalm of deep affliction to be recited with a fitting accompaniment.

1. *O* LORD *God of my salvation*] An expression of absolute trust; whatever may betide, that remains unshaken; cf. Ps. xxvii. 9.

I have cried day and night] The construction is broken. Lit. "day I have cried, by night before Thee;" expressive, as Dr Kay rightly suggests, of the Psalmist's trouble, gasping, so to speak, for utterance.

3. *is full of troubles*] Full .... to satiety; thus Job x. 15, where the same word is used.

unto the grave] "to Sheol," as in Ps. xvi. 10.

4. *go down into the pit*] See Ps. xxviii. 1.

no strength] The Hebrew word, which is somewhat peculiar, implies utter failure of bodily power, the man is become a mere shadow.

5. *Free among the dead*] This interpretation follows the old versions, and is probably correct. The meaning is, free from all earthly duties, as a hireling from his master, Job iii. 19, cf. vii. 1, Exod. xxi. 2; thus too Rom. vi. 7. To this it is objected, though somewhat unfairly, that the word is elsewhere taken in a good sense only, and modern critics generally prefer the rendering "dismissed," from human society, a sense quite justified by the etymology, confirmed by the following clause, and above all by the expression 2 K. xv. 5, "in a several house," *i.e.* a lazar-house, in which Uzziah passed the last years of his life. The Hebrew word is the same in both passages. A meaning quite different from this is suggested by the Arabic, "prostrate," and many critics would render the passage, "my couch is among the dead," with special reference to Job xvii. 13, a passage which was undoubtedly present to the Psalmist's mind; see note on the last word in the psalm.

6 Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps.

7 Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted *me* with all thy waves. Selah.

8 Thou hast put away mine acquaintance far from me; thou hast made me an abomination unto them: *I am* shut up, and I cannot come forth.

9 Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction: LORD, I have called daily upon thee, I have stretched out my hands unto thee.

10 Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise *and* praise thee? Selah.

11 Shall thy lovingkindness be declared in the grave? *or* thy faithfulness in destruction?

12 Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?

13 But unto thee have I cried, O LORD; and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee.

14 LORD, why castest thou off my soul? *why* hidest thou thy face from me?

15 I *am* afflicted and ready to die from *my* youth up: *while* I suffer thy terrors I am distracted.

16 Thy fierce wrath goeth over me; thy terrors have cut me off.

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whom thou rememberest no more] In other psalms, vi. 5, xxx. 9, the suspension of man's power to praise God is dwelt on; but this points to a far deeper affliction, the suspension of God's care and remembrance of the dead in Sheol, "the land of forgetfulness," *v.* 12. See notes on Job x. 21, 22.

cut off from thy hand] Cf. Job xii. 10; Isai. liii. 8; and Ps. xxxi. 22.

6. Each expression in this verse is applied in other passages to the grave, or to Sheol; see especially the note on Job x. 21.

in the deeps] As in Ps. lxix. 15, the abyss is meant, equivalent to "Abaddon" in *v.* 11.

7. *Thy wrath lieth hard upon me*] Other sufferings are represented in figurative terms; the one great cause is the pressure of God's wrath: cf. xxxii. 4.

all thy waves] See Ps. xlii. 7. (The construction is peculiar; LXX. have ἐπήγαγες, and all the ancient versions appear to have had a word with the meaning "brought on.")

8. *Thou hast put away*, &c.] Compare Ps. xxx. 11; Job xix. 13, 14.

an abomination] Job xxx. 10.

I am shut up] Cf. Job iii. 23, xiii. 27, xix. 8, and elsewhere; the expressions in this verse are all specially applicable to a leper, but may be, and probably ought to be, understood figuratively; the imprisonment, and the inability to go out, imply utter prostration, but (as in the case of Job, xxxi. 34) not necessarily external restraint.

9. *Mine eye mourneth*] Ps. vi. 7; Job xvii. 7.

10. *wonders*] Cf. Exod. xv. 11.

shall the dead arise] Isai. xxvi. 14. The Hebrew word *rephaim* is used by Job in a passage to which the Psalmist seems to refer, xxvi. 5; where see note. It denotes wan, shadowy, forms of the once mighty dead; cf. Isai. xiv. 9, 10. The question applies not to a future resurrection, but to the possibility of their rising up in that state to praise God.

11. *Shall thy lovingkindness*] The plea for prolonged life thus rests upon a deep feeling of God's love; the answer however was reserved for a future revelation. The accumulation of expressions is noticeable, "the grave" or **sepulchre**; "destruction" or "Abaddon," as in Job xxvi. 6, xxviii. 22 (the word occurs elsewhere only in Job, and in Prov. xv. 11); "the dark," as in Job x. 21; "the land of forgetfulness," in the twofold sense, where the dead have no remembrance, and where they are wholly forgotten; see note on *v.* 5, and cf. xxxi. 12, and Eccles. ix. 5.

13. The word "I" is strongly emphasized in the Hebrew, marking a sudden turn of thought, "and yet I have cried," &c.; it represents an earnest expostulation.

prevent] A beautiful and true rendering; the morning-prayer would still be offered, as it were to anticipate the grace which it could not fail to win.

14. *why hidest thou*, &c.] Thus Job xiii. 24, "Wherefore hidest thou thy face?" cf. Ps. xiii. 1.

15. *ready to die from my youth up*] Or, "dying from my youth." The word "dying" implies in a dying state, perishing, not merely with reference to the common destiny of man, but as one afflicted with a life-long malady. Such may have been the personal experience of the Psalmist; it is difficult to understand it as used of Israel (Dr Kay), and it is certainly not applicable to Hezekiah, or to Jeremiah.

while I suffer, &c.] Rather, "I have borne Thy terrors; I am distracted:" see Job vi. 4, ix. 34, xiii. 21. The exact meaning of the last word, which occurs here only, is disputed. It evidently denotes the effects of long-con-

17 They came round about me ‖daily like water; they compassed me about together.

‖ Or, *all the day.*

18 Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, *and* mine acquaintance into darkness.

PSALM LXXXIX.

1 *The psalmist praiseth God for his covenant,* 5 *for his wonderful power,* 15 *for the care of his church,* 19 *for his favour to the kingdom of David.* 38 *Then complaining of contrary events,* 46 *he expostulateth, prayeth, and blesseth God.*

‖Maschil of Ethan the Ezrahite.

‖ Or, A Psalm *for Ethan the Ezrahite, to give instruction.*

I WILL sing of the mercies of the LORD for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness †to all generations.

† Heb. *to generation and generation.*

2 For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens.

3 I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have [a]sworn unto David my servant,

[a] 2 Sam. 7. 11, &c.

4 Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne †to all generations. Selah.

† Heb. *to generation and generation.*

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tinued mental anguish, most probably utter exhaustion and confusion of spirit. The LXX. have ἐξηπορήθην. An Arabic etymology is suggested, but is doubtful. The grammatical form of the word indicates a giving way of the will.

16. *Thy fierce wrath*] Lit. "wraths;" the expression represents the overflowing of burning streams.

thy terrors have cut me off] Both words, "terrors" and "cut me off," belong in Hebrew to the style of Job; the former occurs vi. 4, and there only; the latter, though in a different form (here a very peculiar one), in Job vi. 17, xxiii. 17.

17. *They came round about me*] Sc. the floods of wrath, *v.* 16.

they compassed me] Cf. Ps. xviii. 4.

18. *Lover and friend*] See *v.* 8, and cf. Ps. xxxviii. 11.

and mine acquaintance into darkness] Or, **mine intimates—darkness.** The only companion he has to count upon is the darkness of the grave; thus Job xvii. 14, "I have said to corruption, Thou art my father: to the worm, Thou art my mother and my sister." This forcible and affecting figure is generally recognized as the true meaning of the passage by modern critics. In connection with the preceding verses, from 13 onwards, it represents the two great characteristics of the psalm, utter hopelessness of deliverance, and intensity of faith finding expression to the last in prayer.

PSALM LXXXIX.

The inscription assigns this psalm to Ethan the Ezrahite, the colleague of Asaph and Heman. Supposing it to have been composed towards the end of his life, some few years after the death of Solomon, every portion of the psalm finds a perfect explanation in the circumstances of that period.

It is written not by the king, but by one closely connected with him; by a man specially conversant with the divine promises and terms of the covenant with the family of David. The king had been subjected to severest chastisement, an object of God's wrath, *v.* 38; his crown had been dishonoured, 39; the frontiers of his territory had been broken down, his strongholds ruined, his adversaries had prevailed and triumphed over him, his attempts at resistance had failed at once and ignominiously, his glory had passed away, his throne was cast down, old age has come on him in early manhood, he is covered with shame. Each of these points tallies exactly with the facts recorded of the invasion of Shishak, whose enormous army overran the whole country, destroyed the strongholds which had been fortified by Rehoboam, and who reduced the kingdom for a time to a state of vassalage, which is expressly stated to have been a punishment for the sins of the princes, and to have effected its object; for when the king "humbled himself, the wrath of the Lord turned from him;" for "yet in Judah there were good things;" see 2 Chro. xii. 1—12; especially *vv.* 4, 5, 8, and 12, marg. The tone of hopefulness, which, notwithstanding the terrible suffering, pervades the psalm, is thus accounted for, and is strikingly unlike the forebodings of the prophets who were commissioned to announce the ruin of the descendants of Josiah, especially of Jehoiachin, of whom it was expressly said, no more of his seed should "prosper, sitting on the throne of David." See Jer. xxii. 24—30.

The date here assigned is admirably defended by Waterland, Vol. IV. p. 316 ff., and accepted by Bishop Wordsworth and Delitzsch; it accords with the interpretation of other psalms, lxxiv., lxxix., which are referred to the same events in these notes.

The metrical system is highly artistic, such as might be expected from a leader of the Levitical choirs in his advanced age. At the beginning and the end we have severally one division (1—19, 38—51), each with three subdivisions. In the middle the promises of David occupy two parts, 19—37, divided at *v.* 29. The movement throughout is solemn and majestic.

5 And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O LORD: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints.

6 For who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD? *who* among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD?

7 God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all *them that are* about him.

8 O LORD God of hosts, who *is* a strong LORD like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?

9 Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.

10 Thou hast broken [1]Rahab in pieces, as one that is slain; thou hast scattered thine enemies [†]with thy strong arm.

[1] Or, *Egypt.*

[†] Heb. *with the arm of thy strength.*

11 [b]The heavens *are* thine, the earth also *is* thine: *as for* the world and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them.

[b] Gen. 1. 1. Ps. 24. 1. & 50. 12.

12 The north and the south thou hast created them: Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name.

13 Thou hast [†]a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, *and* high is thy right hand.

[†] Heb. *an arm with might.*

14 Justice and judgment *are* the [1]habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face.

[1] Or, *establishment.*

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1. *mercies*] The two words "mercies" and "faithfulness" are the refrain of the psalm; all the hope of the people rests on the "sure mercies of David," Isai. lv. 3, and "the faithfulness" of God, in adhering to His covenant; the latter word recurs in *vv.* 2, 5, 8, 24, 33, see also *v.* 37, note.

2. *shall be built up*] Notwithstanding the overthrow of the king's throne, *v.* 44, it shall be built up and established, *v.* 4, by God's mercy and faithfulness, which by a fine metonymy are thus represented as themselves maintained.

in the very heavens] *i.e.* conspicuous as the sun, and the moon, see *v.* 37.

3. *chosen*] Thus 1 K. viii. 16, "I chose David to be over my people Israel."

I have sworn] *Vv.* 35, 49; see 2 S. vii. 8—16.

5. *the congregation of the saints*] This refers to the assembly of angels, as in Job v. 1, xv. 15. In this and the two following verses the Psalmist refers, with unusual fulness of expression, to the dwellers in heaven. The object is evidently, in the name of the king and of the princes, to declare a formal renunciation of the superstitions into which they had fallen. No mention is here made of false gods, but it is declared that the one office of the heavens and all their hosts is to proclaim the wonders of the Lord, and to acknowledge in reverence and fear His "greatness beyond compare and power divine."

6. *sons of the mighty*] Thus Ps. xxix. 1.

7. *the assembly of the saints*] *i.e.* "the council of the angels:" the two words "congregation" and "council" differ in so far as the one only describes the act, the other the purpose, of their assembling, when "the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord." Job i. 6.

that are about him] Another designation of the angels; cf. Ps. ciii. 20, 21.

8. *O LORD God of hosts*] An appellation used here with special reference to the preceding verses.

like unto thee] Cf. Exod. xv. 11, to which there is an evident reference in this passage; thus for "Lord" the Hebrew has "Jah," as in Exod. xv. 2.

9. *the raging of the sea*] Here, as in numerous passages, representing the wild uproar of invading hosts, Pss. xlvi. 3, lxv. 7. Cf. Job xxvi. 12, xxxviii. 10, 11.

10. *Rahab*] See notes on Job ix. 13, xxvi. 12. The application to Egypt is indisputable in other passages, *e.g.* Ps. lxxxvii. 4, Isai. li. 9. May not this mystical name have been first used in this passage, suggesting the sure overthrow of the invaders of the land, and plunderers of the sanctuary? Hence the special fitness of the words *thine enemies.*

12. The mention of Tabor and Hermon may refer to the occupation of the land of which they are no unfitting representatives, as its most conspicuous and commanding objects; they will yet rejoice in a perfect deliverance. Considering, however, that the north and south have been named, they may severally designate the east and west of Palestine.

14. *the habitation*] Or, **foundation**; Ps. xcvii. 2.

go before thy face] Not in the sense of preceding, but of standing in the presence of God; the two great attributes of the Lord God are, so to speak, personified, thus adumbrating the doctrine to be revealed, Mercy incarnate in the Son, Truth disclosed in the Spirit, that "leadeth into all truth." May not this explain Zech. iv. 14?

15 Blessed *is* the people that know
[c] Numb. 10. 6. the [c]joyful sound: they shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance.

16 In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.

17 For thou *art* the glory of their strength: and in thy favour our horn shall be exalted.

[1] Or, *our shield* is *of the* LORD, *and our king* is *of the Holy One of Israel.* 18 For [1]the LORD *is* our defence; and the Holy One of Israel *is* our king.

19 Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy one, and saidst, I have laid help upon *one that is* mighty; I have exalted *one* chosen out of the people.

[d] 1 Sam. 16. 12. 20 [d]I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him:

21 With whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him.

22 The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him.

23 And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him.

24 But my faithfulness and my mercy *shall be* with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted.

25 I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers.

26 He shall cry unto me, Thou *art* my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation.

27 Also I will make him *my* first-

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15. *that know the joyful sound*] The expression is specific, *teruah*, the sound of "the blowing of trumpets," Lev. xxiii. 24, xxv. 9. See note on Ps. lxxxi. 1. The Psalmist refers to the peculiar privileges of Judah, which retained the full Levitical services in the sanctuary, under the personal superintendence of himself and his two colleagues, Asaph and Heman. This continuous celebration was a pledge of blessing; so long as it was retained the covenant was valid. Thus in Ps. xxvii. 6, David declares that he will offer "sacrifices of joy" (*teruah*), accompanied by the sound of sacred instruments.

they shall walk] As a result of their devotion they will have the light of God's countenance shining on them; with an evident reference to the priestly blessing, Num. vi. 24—26. Cf. Ps. iv. 6.

17. *the glory of their strength*] With reference, probably, to His presence over the Ark, with which the word strength is specially connected. See note on Ps. xcvi. 6.

our horn] Thus *v.* 24; see 1 S. ii. 1.

18. *For the* LORD *is our defence*, &c.] Or, **For our shield *belongeth* to Jehovah; and our king to the Holy One of Israel.** The "shield" is the king himself, who holds his office, with its powers, as servant of the Lord: see Ps. xlvii. 9. This interpretation, which is adopted by nearly all critics (Hupf., Hitz., Del., Kay, Perowne), ought to settle points of great importance, (1) that the psalm was not written by the king himself; (2) that the kingdom was in existence, therefore that the psalm could not belong to the time during or after the exile; and (3) that the king was still in Jerusalem, not in captivity, a description which is specially applicable to Rehoboam. The reference to the shield may possibly have been suggested by the fact that Shishak "took away all the shields of gold which Solomon had made," 1 K. xiv. 26. "Our shield belongs to the Lord," is the reflection of the Psalmist.

19. *Then thou spakest*] This introduces another division of the psalm; from general grounds of confidence it passes to direct pledges. The vision is that recorded in 1 Chro. xvii. 3—15. The holy one is probably David himself (cf. xvi. 10), to whom the vision was communicated: but the reading "Thy holy ones" has the authority of many MSS., and all the ancient versions (LXX., Vulg., Syr., Targ.). Thus Jerome, "quod omnes τοῖς ὁσίοις σου, id est *sanctis tuis*, transtulerunt." 'Ep. ad Lun. et Fret.' 57. Delitzsch understands it to refer both to Nathan and David. The second clause in *v.* 22 is taken almost verbatim from Nathan's vision, 2 S. vii. 10.

I have laid help] Thus Ps. xxi. 5, "honour and majesty hast Thou laid upon him:" "help" is here chosen with reference to the present need, and to the expression "shield" in *v.* 18.

mighty] A word applied to David, 2 S. xvii. 10.

chosen] See *v.* 3; 1 K. xi. 34.

20. *I have found*, &c.] Acts xiii. 22; 1 S. xvi. 12, 13.

21. *shall be established*] Ps. lxxx. 17.

22. *exact upon him*] Come upon him as an exacting creditor. May this refer to claims asserted by Shishak, founded on Solomon's obligations to his predecessors? See *e.g.* 1 K. ix. 16.

25. Cf. Ps. lxxii. 8: a promise claimed with special propriety on behalf of the son of Solomon.

26. *my father*] 2 S. vii. 14.

the rock of my salvation] Ps. xviii. 46; 2 S. xxii. 47.

born, higher than the kings of the earth.

28 My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him.

29 His seed also will I make *to endure* for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.

30 If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments;

† Heb. *profane my statutes.* 31 If they † break my statutes, and keep not my commandments;

32 Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.

† Heb. *I will not make void from him.* 33 Nevertheless my lovingkindness † will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness † to fail.

† Heb. *to lie.* 34 My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.

† Heb. *if I lie.* 35 Once have I sworn by my holiness † that I will not lie unto David.

36 [e] His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. [e] 2 Sam. 7. 16. Luke 1. 33. John 12. 34.

37 It shall be established for ever as the moon, and *as* a faithful witness in heaven. Selah.

38 But thou hast cast off and abhorred, thou hast been wroth with thine anointed.

39 Thou hast made void the covenant of thy servant: thou hast profaned his crown *by casting it* to the ground.

40 Thou hast broken down all his hedges; thou hast brought his strong holds to ruin.

41 All that pass by the way spoil him: he is a reproach to his neighbours.

42 Thou hast set up the right hand of his adversaries; thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice.

43 Thou hast also turned the edge of his sword, and hast not made him to stand in the battle.

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27. *my firstborn*] The expression is applied to Israel, Ex. iv. 22, and then in a special sense to David, as representing Messiah. Ps. ii. 7; cf. Heb. i. 5, 6.

higher than the kings, &c.] Or, **most high over the kings of the earth.** This very strong term is used in Deut. xxviii. 1, "The Lord thy God will set thee *on high* above all nations of the earth." It implies supremacy and dominion approaching the divine. Cf. Num. xxiv. 7.

30. *If his children forsake my law*] Rehoboam "*forsook the law* of the Lord, and all Israel with him," 2 Chro. xii. 1.

31. *break my statutes*] Or, **profane**, as in marg.

32. *with the rod*] 2 S. vii. 14, "with the rod of men," sc. with chastisements not too heavy for human infirmity. In Job xxi. 9, "the rod of God" denotes terrible judgments.

33. *my faithfulness to fail*] Lit. "to lie:" a very strong expression, but see Heb. vi. 18.

34. *break*] **profane**, as *v.* 31.

35. *by my holiness*] Ps. lx. 6.

37. *and as a faithful witness in heaven*] Rather, **and the Witness in heaven is faithful.** By "the Witness," Delitzsch holds that God Himself is meant, comparing Job xvi. 19. (Thus Sym. ὁ διαμαρτυρόμενος, LXX. ὁ μάρτυς.) The objection, that God Who makes the promise cannot represent Himself as the witness, is futile: what God decrees He attests. Some would explain it to mean the moon (Hupf., Perowne), on the singular ground that "in all countries she has been the arbiter of festivals." This, however, is the climax of the whole argument of the Psalmist; he rests wholly on the faithfulness of God (see note on *v.* 1), and his last word is "faithful."

38. *But thou hast cast off*] In contrast to all that is promised comes the description of the actual condition of the king: the object being, not to upbraid the Faithful and True, Whose praise will be ever in the Psalmist's mouth (see *v.* 1), but to shew that the chastisement is complete; it has done its work. See 2 Chro. xii. 12, quoted above.

39. *Thou hast made void*] The Hebrew word occurs elsewhere in Lam. ii. 7 only: Jeremiah, as is his wont, adopts the language of earlier seers.

his crown] See Job xix. 9; Lam. v. 16. In this passage, however, the word refers undoubtedly to the king: his crown was profaned when he was reduced to vassalage. 2 Chro. xii. 8.

40. *his hedges*] Shishak "took the fenced cities which pertained to Judah," l. c. *v.* 4. *Strongholds* fortified by Rehoboam are named in the inscriptions of Karnak.

41. *All that pass by*, &c.] See Ps. lxxx. 12. "The people were without number—Lubims, Sukkiims, and Ethiopians," 2 Chro. xii. 3.

43. *the edge of his sword*] The expressions in this verse imply that no resistance was made in the open field. Such was evidently the case in the Egyptian invasion. The phrase does not mean "blunted the edge of his

† Heb. *brightness.*

44 Thou hast made his †glory to cease, and cast his throne down to the ground.

45 The days of his youth hast thou shortened: thou hast covered him with shame. Selah.

46 How long, LORD? wilt thou hide thyself for ever? shall thy wrath burn like fire?

47 Remember how short my time is: wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?

48 What man *is he that* liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah.

49 Lord, where *are* thy former lov-
ƒ 2 Sam. 7. 15. ingkindnesses, *which* thou ƒswarest unto David in thy truth?

50 Remember, Lord, the reproach of thy servants; *how* I do bear in my bosom *the reproach of* all the mighty people;

51 Wherewith thine enemies have reproached, O LORD; wherewith they have reproached the footsteps of thine anointed.

52 Blessed *be* the LORD for evermore. Amen, and Amen.

PSALM XC.

1 *Moses, setting forth God's providence,* 3 *complaineth of human fragility,* 7 *divine chastisements,* 10 *and brevity of life.* 12 *He prayeth for the knowledge and sensible experience of God's good providence.*

‖ Or, *A Prayer,* being a Psalm *of Moses.*

‖A Prayer of Moses the man of God.

† Heb. *in generation and generation.*

LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place †in all generations.

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sword," as in our usage, but "turned back his attack."

44. *his glory*] Lit. "Thou hast made him to cease from his purity." The expression is peculiar: it implies that the king had contracted defilement, been subjected to treatment which degraded him; an account true of Jechoniah, but not less so of Rehoboam.

cast his throne] See note on *v.* 39.

45. *The days of his youth*] Or, "Thou hast cut short the days of his youth:" *i. e.* of his youthful vigour, as in Job xxix. 4, xxxiii. 25. Rehoboam was forty-six years old, still in the prime of life, when the ruin fell upon him. He survived it twelve years. See 2 Chro. xii. 13.

covered him] Clothed him with shame, as a mantle. Thus Pss. lxxi. 13, cix. 29.

46. *How long, LORD?*] See Ps. lxxiv. 10.

hide thyself] Ps. xiii. 1.

burn like fire] Ps. lxxix. 5.

47. *how short my time is*] Ps. xvii. 14, xxxix. 5; the word rendered "time" is used properly of the brief, frail life of man: hence Dr Kay, "how fleeting." The Psalmist speaks in his own person, but probably as representing the race of man.

wherefore .... in vain] Thus the old interpreters, but modern critics generally give, "for what vanity hast Thou created all men?"

49. *lovingkindnesses*] The word rendered "mercies" in *v.* 1. The Psalmist recurs to his original plea.

in thy truth] Rather, "in Thy faithfulness," as in *v.* 1; the refrain of the Psalmist's expostulation.

50. *how I do bear*, &c.] "I do bear in my bosom all *the reproach* of many peoples." The expression is obscure. The general meaning of "bearing in the bosom," spoken of a chief or teacher, is fostering with tender care; thus of Moses, Num. xi. 12; but the following clause evidently points to the word "reproach" inserted in the A. V. The Psalmist bore the revilings of the enemies of Israel as a heavy load upon his heart.

51. *the footsteps of thine anointed*] This is generally understood to mean "all the movements of the king;" as Perowne suggests, "every step he takes;" so Ps. lvi. 6; but the word, which means "heels," may imply the traces, the retreating movements, the backward steps of the king; see note on *v.* 43. Thus Gen. xlix. 19, "agmen extremum." The Targum has "they revile the tardiness of the footsteps of Thy Christ."

The psalm is not directly Messianic; the whole tone of expostulation and prayer belongs to local and temporary circumstances; but the anticipations are grounded on promises which have their true fulfilment in Christ. It is a noble ode, and forms a fitting close to the book which contains the deep teaching of seers trained in the school of David. The concluding words, though added to mark the completion of this division, seem to have a special connection with the beginning of the psalm, and express the innermost and permanent conviction of the composer.

FOURTH BOOK. PSALMS XC.—CVI.

PSALM XC.

The deepest interest attaches to this solemn hymn, through its title, which ascribes it to Moses. There is nothing in the psalm inconsistent with such authorship: and its general contents, many particular phrases, its resem-

2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou *art* God.

3 Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men.

4 For a thousand years in thy sight *are but* as yesterday when it is past, and *as* a watch in the night.

5 Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are *as* a sleep: in the morning *they are* like grass *which* groweth up.

6 In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.

7 For we are consumed by thine

[a] 2 Pet. 3. 8.

‖ Or, *when he hath passed them.*

‖ Or, *is changed.*

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blance throughout to the books of the Pentateuch, but especially to the book of Deuteronomy, its earnestness, trust, realization of God's nearness, and a melancholy which seems natural in a man of such astonishing experiences and mighty disappointments, fall in with the supposition which general opinion confirms. Many passages, as *vv.* 7, 8, assume a singular significance, as coming from him at the end of his wanderings in the desert; but are pointless in comparison, if written by any other. Moses is styled, as here, Deut. xxxiii. 1, Josh. xiv. 6, Ezra iii. 2, *the man of God.*

1. *dwelling place*] Or, "home;" see Deut. xxxiii. 27; Ps. lxxi. 3, and xci. 9. The word seems specially significant, if written by Moses, who had no fixed dwelling-place for forty years.

in all generations] Cf. Deut. xxxiii. 27.

2. *Before the mountains*, &c.] (1) "Before the mountains, which are the emblems of eternity and strength (Deut. xxxiii. 15; Gen. xlix. 26; Prov. viii. 25), were brought forth and born (Job xxxviii. 8, 28); (2) before the earth, and the world in which we live and move, were born (see Gen. ii. 4); and (3) from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God." The Hebrew word, which is rendered in the A. V. *Thou hadst formed*, is probably the third person fem., and the rendering should be as above, "before the earth and the world were born," &c. A slight change of punctuation in the Hebrew is required for this rendering. The reference is to Gen. i. 9.

3. *Thou turnest*, &c.] Either referring to Gen. iii. 19, in which case the meaning is, "Thou turnest man to destruction (*i.e.* to dust and corruption), and sayest, Return to dust, ye children of dust;" or, "Thou turnest man to dust, and sayest to another generation, Return to life, and occupy for a time." The second exposition (see Eccles. i. 4) sets in the most conspicuous light the contrast between the eternity of God and man's changing existence: but the first seems best, as the words of the place in Gen. seem to be quoted. See also Eccles. xii. 7.

4. *For a thousand*, &c.] Rather, "For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday, **for it passes**, or, **as it passes**, and (as) a watch in the night;" *i.e.* "so dost Thou create, destroy, and re-create successive generations of men; for a thousand years pass away to Thee as one day: for it passes, or, as it passes (so to say), in an instant; as a watch in the night passes momentarily in sleep." The words in the original express rapidity. The rendering of the A. V., "as yesterday when it is past," is approved by good authorities (Zunz, &c.), yet seems, even supposing that the Hebrew will bear it, less spirited and poetical than the other.

a watch in the night] A space of time shorter than the day or night (see Exod. xiv. 24). The night, commencing at 6 o'clock, was divided in early times into three, afterwards into four, watches. Judg. vii. 19; Mark xiii. 35.

5. *Thou carriest*, &c.] Images introduced to mark man's frail nature. "The men (that were) Thou hast carried them away as with a flood: they are as a sleep: as grass which flourishes in the morning and is cut down in the evening, are they," &c. There is obscurity in some of the expressions of this verse; and many commentators conceive that an alteration in the text, or a different arrangement of some words in it, is needful. As it stands (and is exhibited in the A. V.), it presents a sense sufficiently plain. The comparison of man's life and weakness to *grass* is not fully drawn out.—Lit. "in the morning as the grass grows up: in the morning it grows up: in the evening it is cut down (strictly, man cuts it down), and withers: so"—we must supply—"the life of man." In the first two images (*v.* 5) no comparison is *expressed*; man is swept away with a flood: he is a sleep. A single word expresses the first of these similitudes. The phrase (*v.* 5) which in the P. B. V. is interpreted "fade away," is rendered in our version *groweth up*, but in the margin "is changed." It can scarcely (as in the P. B. V.) have two different meanings, *i.e.* "fade away" (*v.* 5), and "groweth up" (*v.* 6), in consecutive verses. In the original there is nothing answering to "dried up" of the P. B. V: it is inserted, we may suppose, partly

anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled.

8 Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret *sins* in the light of thy countenance.

9 For all our days are † passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years ‖ as a tale *that is told.*

10 † The days of our years *are* threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength *they be* fourscore years, yet *is* their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

11 Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, *so is* thy wrath.

12 So teach *us* to number our

† Heb. *turned away.*
‖ Or, *as a meditation.*
† Heb. As for *the days of our years, in them* are *seventy years.*

on account of the rhythm, and partly as an amplification.

7. *For we are consumed*, &c.] From the general subject of man's weakness, the Psalmist turns to speak particularly of the weakness and sin of himself and his people, and of the wrath of God, of which sin was the cause. The complaint is suitable to any period of Israel's history in which suffering followed sin as its meed, but seems specially suited to the experience of Moses. He and his people, on account of their sin, were *consumed* in the wilderness, and *troubled* through His wrath; for all of them, except Caleb and Joshua, perished before their time, and lost the inheritance promised to their fathers. See Deut. i. 35—38.

God's *anger* and *wrath* (the same expressions, Heb., as in the psalm) are constantly coupled in Deut. ix. 19, xxix. 23, 28, &c.

8. *Thou hast set*, &c.] "Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee, so as to mark each one individually, and recollect it: our secret sins (lit. secrets), which we would gladly conceal from ourselves, Thou hast put in the splendour which surrounds Thy countenance; so that Thou Thyself, and all creation, may note each and every one of them." Wherever God in mercy turns His face, a bright benignant radiance shines, Num. vi. 25; Ps. xxxvi. 9. In the midst of this blaze of light, which encompasses Him and uncovers all things everywhere, He has placed the sins of the Psalmist and of His people:—words, which have a singular force if written by Moses, who saw the splendour of God, and carried away from His person (Exod. xxxiv. 29) its manifest tokens.

9. *For all our days*, &c.] "For all our days pass away (quickly) in Thine anger; we spend our years as a tale, or, as a meditation, that has come to an end; or, as a word that is spoken, and thought of no more." The complaint is of the shortness and misery of life through God's wrath; a complaint which has a singular propriety if uttered by Moses, who saw a generation of men perish before their time in a few years, and multitudes perish in a moment by special interposition of God. The word rendered "passed away" means (see the marg.) "have turned" as the day turns at evening. Jer. vi. 4, "Woe unto us! for the day **turneth** (in our version; *goeth away*), for the shadows of the evening are stretched out." A quick, unexpected, invisible passing is imaged. The comparison which follows of the years of life to a tale that is told, or a word, whisper, sigh, or thought, which is spoken, heard, or imagined; for a moment, and leaves no trace, is of similar import: Job xxxvii. 2, "the *sound* that goeth out of his mouth" (Heb. as in the ps.), favours the interpretation, a *sound* or *word*. Note, the poetical form of the word *years*, in the next verse, occurs Deut. xxxii. 7.

10. *The days of our years*, &c.] Lit. (as in the marg.) "As for the days of our years, in them (are) seventy years." But the spirit and manner of the original are better exhibited, if the distinct versicles are marked.

"All the days of our years—seventy years
are they;
Or if strength be great, seventy and
ten years;
And their pride is labour and sorrow;
For soon it has passed away—and we too
must fly away!"

By **their pride**, *their strength* in our version, is meant that which is best in each, *i.e.* youth, beauty, strength or glory, as in each case may happen.

This lament over the shortness of life, and its limitation to seventy or eighty years, seems inconsistent with the supposition that Moses wrote the psalm. Moses lived 120 years, Aaron 123 years, Miriam longer. We can only guess what was the average duration of life in that generation with which Moses lived in the wilderness. It was certainly much lower than that of any one of those named; and probably lower than that specified in the psalm. But the Psalmist is not speaking of an exceptional average, as that of the people whose lives were miraculously shortened, but of the general lot of man, and of his average life as shortened by divine ordinance. The latter may not improbably have been communicated to Moses by God, before the sentence was fully carried out.

† Heb. *cause to come.*

days, that we may † apply *our* hearts unto wisdom.

13 Return, O LORD, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants.

14 O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

15 Make us glad according to the days *wherein* thou hast afflicted us, *and* the years *wherein* we have seen evil.

16 Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.

17 And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

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11. *Who knoweth*, &c.] Or, *Who knoweth the power of Thine anger*, and *according to Thy fear*, (who understands) *Thy wrath? i.e.* "Who understands, practically and for life's guidance, what Thine anger is? Who understands the terror of Thy wrath, in a way that a just fear of Thee, a fear suitable to Thy majesty and holiness, should impart?"

12. *So teach us*, &c.] Rather, "Teach us so to number our days; and **we shall obtain a heart of wisdom!**" "So," *i.e.* rightly, in accordance with a just fear of Thee, and appreciation of Thy displeasure; to be connected with the preceding verse, not with what follows, as in 1 S. xxiii. 17: or, in accordance with the accents, "To number our days, O teach us *thus* to understand! and we shall obtain," &c. "We shall obtain," an image taken from the "gathering in" and "bringing home" of a plentiful harvest (2 S. ix. 10; Hag. i. 6, &c.).

13. *Return, O* LORD, &c.] Rather, **Turn, O Lord!** *i.e.* from Thy fierce anger: **repent** (*of this evil*, Exod. xxxii. 12), or, **shew compassion** towards Thy servants. "*How long* will it be ere Thou dost turn?"

thy servants] See Deut. ix. 27, xxxii. 36, &c.

14. *early*] Or, **in the morning**, of a new day of mercy and hope.

15. *Make us glad*, &c.] "Make us to rejoice *according to the days*, for a time, that is, bearing some proportion to the days wherein Thou hast afflicted us, to the long years in which we saw calamity."

The poetical form of the word (ימות) signifying "days," occurs only here and Deut. xxxii. 7. The poetical form of the word (שנות) signifying "years," occurs here again (see above, *v.* 10). Also comp. Deut. viii. 2, "And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, *to humble thee*." In the Heb. "to afflict thee," as in the psalm.

16. *Let thy work*, &c.] See Pss. xcii. 4, xliv. 2, lxxvii. 12, &c. "Let Thy power and majesty be seen, as oftentimes, and exerted for the deliverance of Thy people!" If Moses be the Psalmist, Jehovah's work, Deut. xxxii. 4, is the performance of His promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the establishment of His people in Canaan. This latter work was to be accomplished through the instrumentality of men, therefore the Psalmist adds, "Prosper thou *the work of our hands* upon us:" a phrase common in Deut., see ch. ii. 7, iv. 28, xiv. 29, xvi. 15, &c.

17. *beauty*, &c.] "May the grace and favour and loveliness of God: may all that in Him is beautiful, endearing, and engaging, be shewn to us, who have experienced His severity and justice!"

The cloud which hung over the psalm in its opening portion is partially removed towards its close. That intense confidence in God which is characteristic of Moses the servant of God through his varied history, breaks forth, if he be indeed the Psalmist, at the last. The phrases employed, and change of rhythm in *vv.* 14, 15, 16, &c., mark the transition from dark despondency under the sense of God's wrath, to a hope of the mercy so often experienced. It has been remarked (Perowne, 'Pref.' p. xvii.) that this psalm is like the pillar of fire and cloud which led the march of Israel: it is dark and bright: it is dark as it looks in sorrowful retrospect upon man; it is bright as it is turned in hope and confidence to God. In its grand purport, as well as in many particulars which have been mentioned, in loftiness of tone, solemnity, acquaintance with God, close approximation to Him, and a magic power of swaying the thoughts and moving them to their depths, it reminds us of the acknowledged compositions of Moses: and it is strange that eminent critics should imagine such a psalm, worthy (all allow) of Moses the man of God, to have been written late, and attributed to a mighty name. Grotius says "(Psalmus) non ab ipso Mose factus sed ejus rebus animoque conveniens." Hupfeld says, "The contents of the psalm, its profound earnestness, and solemn treatment of the theme of man's weakness and misery through sin, are worthy of Moses, and suitable to the close of his life in the desert." Ewald says, "There is something in the psalm that is wonderfully striking and solemn, ac-

PSALM XCI.

1 *The state of the godly.* 3 *Their safety.* 9 *Their habitation.* 11 *Their servants.* 14 *Their friend; with the effects of them all.*

HE that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall † abide under the shadow of the Almighty. † Heb. *lodge.*

2 I will say of the LORD, *He is* my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.

3 Surely he shall deliver thee from

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quainting us with the profoundest depths of the Divine Nature. These awful thoughts may well have occurred to Moses at the close of his wanderings: and the author, whoever he may be, is plainly a man grown grey with a vast experience, here taking his stand at the end of his earthly course."

PSALM XCI.

This psalm has been called the *Invocavit* psalm of the Church, and in the Talmud ('Tal. Hierosol. Sab.' VI. 2) "a song of accidents," *i.e.* a protective or talismanic song in times of danger. Like most of those contained in the fourth book, it bears no inscription in the Hebrew. In common with Pss. xcii. and xciii. it seems to have been designed for liturgical use. The ancient Rabbins and some modern commentators assign it to Moses, but on no stronger grounds, apparently, than its place in the Psalter in connection with Ps. xc., and its verbal coincidences with Deut. xxxii. and xxxiii. It has many thoughts and expressions resembling those which occur in the psalms of David, to whom it is ascribed in the LXX., but as regards its peculiar phraseology it has a closer resemblance to the book of Job. Professor Plumptre ('Biblical Studies,' p. 184) characterizes it as "an echo, verse by verse almost, of the words in which Eliphaz the Temanite describes the good man's life." Job v. 17—23. The supposition that it was composed with special reference to the pestilence recorded in 2 S. xxiv. and 1 Chro. xxi., appears to be groundless; for (1) it is doubtful whether there is any direct allusion to such a calamity in *v.* 3; and (2) it seems impossible to reconcile the language of *v.* 8 with that of David in 1 Chro. xxi. 17.

The fundamental idea of the psalm is the security, at all times, of the man who makes God his refuge, and who has the Most High as his defence. It is equally applicable to seasons of national visitation, whether of pestilence or other calamity, and to the occurrences of daily life. It may, indeed, be fitly described as an expansion of the idea expressed by S. Paul, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" The difficulties arising out of the repeated changes of person have been unduly magnified. Though more than ordinarily numerous and abrupt, they are by no means without parallel in other psalms (see *e. g.* Pss. xviii. 24—28, xx. throughout, xli. 4—9, cix. 5, 6, and cxxi. throughout). The simplest and most natural explanation of these changes, and one which involves no arbitrary alteration of the text, seems to be that the psalm was composed as a pilgrim song, and that it consists of the alternate responses of two voices, thus: 1st voice, *v.* 1: 2nd voice, *v.* 2. 1st voice, *vv.* 3—8: 2nd voice, *v.* 9*a*. 1st voice, *vv.* 9*b*—13. The oracle, or divine response, contained in *vv.* 14—16, forms the fitting conclusion. Its principal division into two parts is clearly marked by the refrain of *v.* 9, and also by the recurrence in *vv.* 9 and 10 of the theme or ground-thought of the psalm, as enunciated in *vv.* 1, 2.

Although the psalm has numerous references to earlier compositions, it is, as Delitzsch has observed, one of the most original and beautiful in the Psalter, and, in common with many of the psalms contained in this book, it resembles in style the second part of the prophecies of Isaiah.

1. *He that dwelleth*, &c.] Or, **He that dwelleth in the covert of the Most High**—(that) **abideth under the shadow of the Almighty.** Both clauses of the verse may be regarded as describing, in accordance with one of the most common forms of Hebrew parallelism, the character of the man who is the object of the divine protection. The omission of the relative pronoun before "abideth" in *v.* 1 has three parallels in *vv.* 5 and 6, as may be seen in the A. V., where "that" occurs three times in italics. It is probable, from *v.* 4, that the allusion in *vv.* 1 and 2 is to the overshadowing wings of the cherubim in the most holy place, rather than to the shelter from heat and storm afforded to the traveller by the rock-hewn caves of Palestine; [cf. Pss. xvii. 8, lvii. 1, lxiii. 7; in which passages the words translated "shadow" (*v.* 1), and "wings" (*v.* 4), are combined;] or, there may be an allusion to both, as in Ps. lxi. 2—4. Cf. Pss. xxvii. 5, xxxi. 20, xxxii. 7, cxix. 114; Isai. xvi. 4, xxxii. 2.

abide] Lit., **passes the night.** Cf. Gen. xix. 2; Job xxxix. 9, 28.

2. *I will say of the* LORD] The key-note of the psalm being struck in *v.* 1, the response of the second voice, in *v.* 2, "I will say," &c. involves no serious difficulty, and necessitates no conjectural change of reading or punctuation. According to the accentuation the translation should be, "I say, To Jehovah belongs," &c., or, "In Jehovah is," &c., but (see *v.* 9, where the address is direct) the words may

the snare of the fowler, *and* from the noisome pestilence.

4 He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth *shall be thy* shield and buckler.

5 Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; *nor* for the arrow *that* flieth by day;

6 *Nor* for the pestilence *that* walketh in darkness; *nor* for the destruction *that* wasteth at noonday.

7 A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; *but* it shall not come nigh thee.

8 Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.

9 Because thou hast made the LORD, *which is* my refuge, *even* the most High, thy habitation;

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be rendered "I say to Jehovah, My refuge and my fortress," *i.e.* I habitually invoke Him as such. To those who thus trust in Him God reveals Himself not only as El Elyon and El Shaddai (*v.* 1), but as Jehovah, the covenant God of His believing people (Exod. vi. 3, where see note).

fortress] See Note at end.

3. *Surely he shall deliver thee*] Rather, **For He shall deliver thee**, or, "For He, even He, delivers thee." These words begin the response of the first voice, assigning the ground of the confidence just expressed. The pronoun is emphatic.

from the snare of the fowler] Cf. Ps. cxxiv. 7 (a psalm of degrees), where the same figure occurs with reference to the men who rose up against Israel: also Pss. xviii. 5, cxli. 9; Eccles. ix. 12; Hos. ix. 8. Spiritually, the promise of deliverance applies to "the snare of the devil." Cf. 2 Tim. ii. 26.

from the noisome pestilence] Rather, **from the pestilence of malignity.** The second noun is in the plural, which gives it an emphatic and comprehensive meaning. See note on Ps. v. 9. Cf. Ps. lvii. 1.

4. *He shall cover thee with his feathers*] Or, "There shall be a covering for thee under His pinion." The verb here used occurs with reference to the ark as concealed by the vail (Ex. xl. 3, 21), and to the cherubim as covering the mercy-seat with their wings (1 K. viii. 7). (Cf. Ezek. xxviii. 14, 16; S. Matt. xxiii. 37.)

shalt thou trust] Rather, "thou shalt take refuge." Cf. Ps. lvii. 1.

his truth shall be thy shield and buckler] Or, "shield and buckler is His truth." The word rendered *shield* denotes the large shield which protected the whole body, the θυρεός, *scutum*, as distinguished from the ἀσπίς, *clypeus*. Cf. Ps. v. 12; Eph. vi. 16.

5. *terror by night*] The perils to which Eastern travellers are exposed by night, from robbers and beasts of prey, are very numerous. Cf. Job xxxvi. 20. Night attacks, like that of Gideon, were also common in Eastern warfare.

the arrow] The continuity of thought and of metaphor is still preserved. The arrow may be God's arrow (see Deut. xxxii. 23, 24), as *e.g.* the pestilence, or any noxious influence, such as the Simoom, or Sirocco, which is said to prevail most commonly in the day-time (see Ritter's 'Compar. Geog. of Palestine,' I. 249, and 'The Negeb,' pp. 37, 38, for a description of it); or it may be the arrow of the enemy, *i. e.* any hostile assault. The sixth verse may be regarded as explanatory, on the principle of parallelism, of the fifth, or as illustrative of its meaning.

7. *A thousand shall fall*, &c.] Lit. "There shall fall on thy side (*i.e.* thy left hand) a thousand, and ten thousand on thy right hand; to thee it shall not come nigh." The omitted particle may be supplied in the first clause of the verse thus: "*If* a thousand should fall," &c.; cf. Ps. xxxix. 11: or, more correctly, in the second, as in the A.V.; "*but* it shall not," &c. Cf. Ps. cxix. 23, 51, 61; Hos. viii. 12. The singular number ("*it* shall not come nigh") is expressive of the security of the righteous man from each and every form of the dangers and evils enumerated. The promise has its spiritual fulfilment, whether the temporal danger be averted, or whether grace and strength sufficient for the day be vouchsafed. The same rod which destroys the wicked comforts the righteous, even in the passage through the dark valley of the shadow of death. The man who keeps Christ's saying never sees death, because for him the sting of death is extracted. Cf. Joh. viii. 51, 52; 1 Cor. xv. 55—57.

8. *Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold*] It was thus with the Israelites when, having passed safely through the Red Sea, they "saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea-shore," Exod. xiv. 30. Cf. also Exod. xii. 29, 30; 2 Chro. xx. 17.

reward] Or, "recompence." The same form of the word is not found elsewhere. Cf. Isai. xxxiv. 8, where a plural masculine form occurs.

9. *Because thou hast made*] Rather, **For Thou, O Jehovah, art my refuge: thou** (see Intr.) **hast made the Most High thy habitation.** The first clause refers to *v.* 2, and seems to be the refrain of the second voice, in which case the second clause of the verse will be the response of the first voice.

10 There shall no evil befall thee,
neither shall any plague come nigh
thy dwelling.

[a] Matth. 4. 6. Luke 4. 10. 11 [a]For he shall give his angels
charge over thee, to keep thee in all
thy ways.

12 They shall bear thee up in
their hands, lest thou dash thy foot
against a stone.

13 Thou shalt tread upon the lion
and [1]adder: the young lion and the
dragon shalt thou trample under feet.

[1] Or, *asp.*

14 Because he hath set his love
upon me, therefore will I deliver him:
I will set him on high, because he
hath known my name.

15 He shall call upon me, and I
will answer him: I *will be* with him

The word which is rendered "habitation" is the same which is used in Ps. xc. 1.

10. *There shall no evil*, &c.] The promise of exemption from calamity is here expressed yet more strongly. The word rendered "evil" denotes any calamity, whatever its origin, or its nature. The word rendered "plague" is one which is commonly used to denote the stroke of God's hand, as the leprosy, pestilence, &c.

thy dwelling] Lit. **thy tent.** The word comports well with the general complexion of the psalm as a pilgrim psalm.

11. *his angels*] The promise of angelic guardianship is here (as in Ps. xxxiv. 7) given to all who trust in the Lord. The words neither assert nor deny the appointment of specific guardian angels to individuals. Cf. Gen. xxiv. 7; Exod. xxiii. 20; Dan. iii. 28.

over thee] Or, "with respect to," or "on account of thee," *i.e.* for thy benefit. The angels are said to be "sent forth for ministry on behalf of those who shall be heirs of salvation." Heb. i. 14.

in all thy ways] The office of the angel whom God promised to send before the Israelites is described in the words "to keep thee (the same word here used) in the way." (Exod. xxiii. 20.) When Satan applied this verse of the psalm to our Lord in the wilderness, he omitted the words "in all thy ways," as not suitable to his purpose. "Non est via hæc, sed ruina; et si via tua est, non illius. Frustra in tentationem Capitis intorsisti, quod scriptum est ad corporis consolationem." D. Bernard. 'Serm. XIV. in Ps. xc.' (Heb. xci.).

12. *in their hands*] **upon their hands.** LXX. ἐπὶ χειρῶν. The same figure which pervades the psalm appears here under another form. As the eagle is represented in Deut. xxxii. 11, bearing its young "on her wings," so the angels, the flying ones (cf. Isai. vi. 6; Dan. ix. 21; Rev. viii. 13, xiv. 6), are here described as lifting up the righteous "upon their hands," or pinions.

lest thou dash thy foot, &c.] There is probably a reference here to Prov. iii. 23, as in *vv.* 5, 6 to Prov. iii. 25, 26. The stone is in entire harmony with the view taken of this psalm as a journeying psalm.

13. *Thou shalt tread*, &c.] Although the verbs rendered "tread" and "trample under foot" have primary reference to the second of the two nouns in each clause of the verse, nevertheless, in the narrow mountain-passes of the East, obstacles can often be overcome in no other manner than by walking over them. Figuratively, the assaults of open violence are fitly represented by the fury of the lion, whilst those of secret malice are as fitly represented by the venomous bite of the serpent. Cf. S. Mark xvi. 18, "they shall take up serpents;" S. Luke x. 19, "Behold I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy;" Rom. xvi. 20, "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly;" also Judg. xiv. 6; 1 S. xvii. 34, 35; Dan. vi. 23; Acts xxviii. 3, 6; and more especially S. Matt. iv. 1—11. "Sed manifeste etiam leonem te conculcabit *Leo de tribu Iuda*." D. Bernard., ut supra.

14. *set his love upon me*] The word which is rendered "set his love," and which is more literally rendered "to take pleasure in one," is used in Deut. vii. 7, and x. 15, to denote God's delight in His people. Here, the delight of God's people in Him is represented as drawing forth the fulfilment of His promises to them.

deliver him] *i.e.* "set him free," or "enable him to escape." Cf. Ps. xviii. 48, cxliv. 2.

I will set him on high] The promise becomes brighter and fuller, but the same figure is preserved which is used in *v.* 12.

he hath known my name] *i. e.* My covenant name, Jehovah. See note on *v.* 2.

15. *I will be with him in trouble*] God is described in Ps. xlvi. 1, as the "very present help" of His people in "troubles," the plural of the same word used in this verse.

I will deliver him] Or, "rescue him," a different verb from that employed in *v.* 14. Cf. Ps. l. 15, of which the promise contained in this verse is an echo.

and honour him] Because he honours God by reposing all his confidence in him. Cf. 1 S. ii. 30.

16. *With long life*] **length of days.** See note on Ps. xxi. 4. A long life in the land of promise was the reward of obedience to the requirements of the Mosaic law. Cf. Ex.

in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him.

16 With †long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation. † Heb. *length of days.*

xx. 12 (where see note); Deut. v. 16. But the words here, as in Ps. xxiii. 6, and elsewhere, require a larger and a spiritual interpretation, as looking forward to that eternal life of which a long life in the land of Canaan was the type and the pledge.

and shew him my salvation] *i. e.* cause him to behold it with complete satisfaction; an echo of Ps. l. 23. Cf. also Pss. liv. 7, lix. 10, cvi. 5, cxii. 8, cxviii. 7, cxxviii. 5; and see note on Psalm xxii. 17. "To live to see the final glory," says Delitzsch in loc., "was the rapturous thought of the Old Testament hope, and, in the apostolic age, of the New Testament hope also." Cf. Gen. xlix. 18; Ps. cxviii. 14, 21.; Isai. xii. 2; Heb. ix. 28.

NOTE on Psalm xci. 2.

The word מצודה is rightly rendered "fortress" or "defence" in this place. But it also means a net (Ps. lxvi. 11; Ezek. xii. 13); and if, as is possible, the Psalmist had this signification also in his mind, we are able to trace a continuity of thought in the following verse: "He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler;" and also in *v.* 4, where the figure of the bird is again introduced.

PSALM XCII.

1 *The prophet exhorteth to praise God,* 4 *for his great works,* 6 *for his judgments on the wicked,* 10 *and for his goodness to the godly.*

A Psalm *or* Song for the sabbath day.

IT is a good *thing* to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High:

2 To shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness †every night, † Heb. *in the nights.*

3 Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; ‖upon the harp with †a solemn sound. ‖ Or, *upon the solemn sound with the harp.* † Heb. *Higgaion.*

4 For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands.

5 O Lord, how great are thy

Psalm xcii.

The title of this psalm seems to imply that it was used in the temple-services on the Sabbath-day. It was sung, we are told, in the morning at the time of the drink-offering of the first lamb, and also on the second day of the Feast of Tabernacles (see 'Middoth,' II. 5). It is a disputed question, however, in the Talmud whether the psalm refers to the Sabbath of Creation, or to the final Sabbath of the world's history; and it is described in one place as "A Psalm or Song for the future age, all of which will be Sabbath." S. Athanasius describes its subject as the rest which remains for the faithful; *αἰνεῖ ἐκείνην τὴν γενησομένην ἀνάπαυσιν.* The Sabbath number is preserved in this psalm in the sevenfold recurrence of the word Jehovah. The theme is the faithfulness and truth of God as displayed in His righteous administration of the universe, and as vindicated by the ultimate destiny both of the righteous and of the wicked. The chief points of difference between this and other psalms in which the same subject is treated are (1), that whereas they, for the most part (cf. Pss. i., xxxvii., lxxiii.), teach the equity of God's providential government dogmatically, this proclaims it in a song of thanksgiving; and (2), whereas elsewhere, especially in Psalm lxxiii., the inequality in the present administration of God's providence is a source of perplexity, this psalm seems to have its standing-point in a dispensation in which we shall no longer "see through a glass darkly," and in which the promise, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter," shall have received its fulfilment. In this psalm, as in the preceding, God is spoken of as Elyon, "Most High." Both psalms employ the sacred name Jehovah, and the sentiment expressed in xcii. 11 corresponds with that of xci. 8.

1. *to sing praises*] The word means either to "sing" or "play upon an instrument." It is used also to denote the accompaniment of the song with instrumental music. The noun *mizmor, i.e.* "psalm," is derived from it.

3. *Upon an instrument of ten strings*, &c.] It is probable that two instruments only are named in this verse, and that it should be rendered thus: "With a ten-stringed instrument, even with the lute, with a solemn (or gentle) sound upon the harp." LXX. *ἐν δεκαχόρδῳ ψαλτηρίῳ μετ' ᾠδῆς ἐν κιθάρᾳ.* See critical Note at end.

4. *through thy work*] Or, "through Thy works," as it is in many MSS. The words translated in the A. V. "work" and "works" are different in the Heb. The former is frequently used of God's works or dispensations

works! *and* thy thoughts are very deep.

6 A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this.

7 When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; *it is* that they shall be destroyed for ever:

8 But thou, LORD, *art most* high for evermore.

9 For, lo, thine enemies, O LORD, for, lo, thine enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.

10 But my horn shalt thou exalt like *the horn of* an unicorn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil.

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in providence (cf. Pss. xliv. 1, xc. 16). The latter is a more common word, and includes the works of creation. (Cf. Ps. viii. 6; also cxliii. 5, where both words are found, and apparently in the senses respectively assigned to them here.) The unfolding of the psalm begins with this verse.

6. *A brutish man*] *i.e.* man in his rude, uncultivated state, as by nature (cf. Ps. lxxiii. 22).

a fool] Literally, "one fat or fleshy." This word, which is of frequent occurrence in the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, is found only in two other places in the Psalms, viz. xlix. 10, which probably belongs to the same period as this series of psalms (see introd. to that psalm), and xciv. 8. In both cases it is found in conjunction with the word rendered "brutish." Both words are opposed to the truly wise, *i.e.* righteous man, who rightly considers God's works. The Psalms frequently refer to the elevating influences of spiritual intuition as constituting the true distinction between the natural man (ψυχικός) and the spiritual man (πνευματικός).

7. *When the wicked spring as the grass*] The same verb is applied to the righteous in *v.* 12, and translated "flourish." In eastern countries the grass, beneath the influence of heavy rains and a hot sun, soon attains maturity, and is as quickly scorched and withered. (Cf. Ps. xxxvii. 35, 36, where the coincidence of thought is striking, but the phraseology is different.) There seems to be a reference to this verse in 1 Macc. ix. 23, where the correspondence with the LXX. version of it is very close.

it is that they shall be destroyed] Lit. "for, or with reference to, their being destroyed;" *i.e.* that they are fast ripening for destruction. Cf. Ps. lxii. 9. (Cf. also Job xxvii. 14, where, however, the construction is different.)

for ever] A peculiar expression. It is found only in two other psalms, viz. lxxxiii. 17, and cxxxii. 12, 14, and twice in Isaiah. See Note at end.

8. *art most high*] Or, "art (throned) on high." Cf. Ps. xciii. 4. This verse, standing in the middle of the psalm, contains the central truth which is enforced throughout it. The assurance that "the Lord sitteth above the water-floods" is the prop of the righteous man's faith, however the people may rage, and however vehemently the water-floods may beat.

9. *For, lo, thine enemies*] The word rendered "lo" seems to point with a finger of scorn to the workers of iniquity and to their end. Cf. "those mine enemies," S. Luke xix. 27. The iteration tends greatly to strengthen the force of the passage.

shall be scattered] The word may mean simply dispersed (cf. Job iv. 11), or it may mean (so the Chaldee) separated, *i.e.* separated from the congregation of the righteous, as the chaff is separated by winnowing from the wheat (S. Matt. xiii. 30), and as the sheep are divided from the goats (S. Matt. xxv. 32). Cf. Job xli. 17. Although the world-powers now seem great and compact, they are destined to be smitten by the stone "cut out without hands;" and then "the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold" must be "broken to pieces together, and become like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors" (Dan. ii. 35).

10. *But my horn*, &c.] Rather, "But my horn hast thou exalted as that of the oryx (or wild ox)." See notes on Num. xxiii. 22; Job xxxix. 9; Ps. xxii. 21. The height of the horn was the measure of the real or imaginary greatness of the wearer. As God is "enthroned on high" (cf. *v.* 8, where the root is the same as in the word "exalted"), and is the Most High (*v.* 1), so He lifts up and sets on high His people.

I shall be anointed] Rather, "I am anointed with fresh oil," cf. Ps. xxiii. 5. The expression "I am anointed with *fresh* oil" denotes ease, refreshment, and health. The importance of extracting the oil before the berry becomes black, and consequently of gathering the fruit at the proper time, is well known. It is thought best to carry the fruit to the press as soon as it is gathered and cleaned. See Smith's 'Dict.' art. *Olive*. "Si in terrâ vel tabulato oleum nimium diu erit, putrescet... ex quovis oleo oleum *viridius* vel bonum fieri potest, *si tempori facias*." M. Cato, 'De rebus rusticis.' The word rendered "fresh," which is commonly used of the tree and translated "green," is, in this place only, used of its oil. See Note at end of Psalm.

11 Mine eye also shall see *my desire* on mine enemies, *and* mine ears shall hear *my desire* of the wicked that rise up against me.

[a] Hos. 14. 5. 12 [a] The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

13 Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God.

14 They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and [†] flourishing; [† Heb. *green.*]

15 To shew that the LORD *is* upright: *he is* my rock, and *there is* no unrighteousness in him.

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11. *shall see my desire . . . . shall hear my desire*] Or, "has seen my desire." Although the words "my desire" are rightly printed in italics, their verbal equivalents being wanting, the Hebrew idiom in both clauses implies the meaning expressed in the A.V. (see *v.* 7 and note). This is the only case of the occurrence of this idiom after a verb of hearing.

mine enemies] Rather, "those who lie in wait for me." This form of the word does not occur elsewhere.

of the wicked that rise up against me] Rather, "of those who rise up against me (as) evil-doers (or acting maliciously)."

12. *like the palm tree*] The palm-tree of the Oasis is remarkable for its erect growth, notwithstanding the weight of its produce ("nititur in pondus palma"), its perpetual verdure, its power of putting forth young shoots even in old age, the quantity of the fruit which it bears, and the distance of its foliage from the earth. Growing, as it does, in places where no other tree is found, it is an image of life in the midst of surrounding death. (See Delitzsch in loc., and note on Ps. i. 3.).

he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon] As the date-palm of the desert is remarkable for its vital energy, so is the cedar of Lebanon for its stately and gigantic growth. The cedar is a lofty, long-lived, wide-spreading, and deeply-rooted tree. Its wood is fragrant and almost imperishable. Twelve of the cedars of mount Lebanon still remain, and young trees in the East are as rare as ruins in the West. (See Tristram's 'Land of Israel,' p. 17.) Some of the properties belonging both to the palm-tree and the cedar seem to be alluded to in Isai. lxv. 22 and Song Sol. ii. 3.

13. *Those that be planted*] Rather, "They are planted (or, being planted) in the house of Jehovah, they shall blossom," &c. (cf. Job xiv. 9). Dean Stanley and others are of opinion that certain trees were planted in the courts of the temple. The prohibition of Deut. xvi. 21 (see note in loc.) seems to refer solely to idolatrous images. It appears also not improbable, considering the heat of the climate, that the court of the tabernacle, and afterwards the courts of the temple, were partially shaded by the foliage of trees. Nor are there wanting passages which seem to support this idea, as Josh. xxiv. 26, which speaks of the oak, or terebinth, by (or in) "the *sanctuary* of the Lord" (מקדש = ἱερόν), and Ps. lii. 8, where the Psalmist compares himself to "a green olive-tree in the house of the Lord." The righteous are like trees planted in a good soil. (Cf. "trees of righteousness, the planting of Jehovah," Isai. lxi. 3.) The LXX. render *shethulim* by πεφυτευμένοι; the other Greek versions render it by μεταφυτευθέντες, *transplanted*. So Jerome, *transplantati*. The wicked man, on the contrary, is compared to a tree growing in its own soil. He is indigenous. See notes on Pss. i. 3 and xxxvii. 35.

in the courts of our God] The word "courts," in the plural, appears to be used only of the temple, not of the tabernacle with its one court.

14. *bring forth fruit*] Or, "shall be vigorous," or "in full vital energy."

in old age] This seems to look back to Ps. xci. 16, "With long life will I satisfy him." The allusion to the cedar and the date-palm is still sustained; both being remarkable for longevity.

fat and flourishing] *i.e.* "full of sap and rich in verdure" (the same word as in *v.* 10, which is there translated "fresh"), in allusion probably to the vital energy and productiveness of the date-palm, and to the perpetual verdure both of that tree, and also of the cedar. The corresponding Aramaic word is used of Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. iv. 4, and rendered "flourishing."

15. *To shew*, &c.] This verse looks back to *v.* 2. The verb rendered in *v.* 2 "to shew forth," and here "to shew," is the same. The "no unrighteousness" of *v.* 15 is the exact equivalent of the "faithfulness" of *v.* 2; the two words being the direct opposites of each other. Cf. "a God of truth, and without iniquity," Deut. xxxii. 4, where the word rendered "truth" is the same as that which is rendered "faithfulness" in *v.* 2, and the word rendered "iniquity" differs only in form from that which is rendered "unrighteousness" in this verse.

NOTES on PSALM XCII. 3, 7, and 10.

3. Some think that four musical instruments are denoted in this verse. In this case it may be rendered thus; "To (or upon) the ten-stringed instrument, and to the lute; to the higgaion, with (*i.e.* with the accompaniment of) the harp." But (1) in the two other places in which the word עָשׂור occurs, viz. Ps. xxxiii. 2 (where see note), and Ps. cxliv. 9, it is preceded by the word נֵבֶל and one instrument, viz. the ten-stringed lute, is denoted; (2) the word הִגָּיון does not denote any musical instrument in Ps. xix. 14, or Lam. iii. 62, or in the only other place, besides the present, in which it occurs, viz. Ps. ix. 16, where see note. Moreover, had two musical instruments been mentioned in the second clause of the verse the parallelism would have led us to expect ועלי כנור instead of בכנור. This, however, appears to be the only place in which the prep. עַל or עלי is used instead of בְּ in connection with musical instruments.

7. The former of the two words עֲדֵי־עַד is generally regarded as a prep., as in Ps. civ. 23, after the form עֲלֵי. It is not improbable, however, that it is here the const. form of the noun, and that the rendering should be "for ever and ever," or lit. "(for) duration of duration;" the prep. עַד being omitted for the sake of euphony, as in the titles of Pss. lvii. and lviii. עַל is omitted before אֵל. Cf. עד עולמי עד Isai. xlv. 17.

10. Two other words corresponding in form with בלתי, "I am anointed," are used intransitively, viz. חמותי, Isai. xliv. 16, and דלותי, Ps. cxvi. 6. Saul and Jehu were anointed with the *flask*, פַּךְ, *φάκος* (1 S. x. 1; 2 K. ix. 1); David with the *horn*, קֶרֶן, the word used in this place (1 S. xvi. 13).

PSALM XCIII.

The majesty, power, and holiness of Christ's kingdom.

THE LORD reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the LORD is clothed with strength, *wherewith* he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.

2 Thy throne *is* established † of old: thou *art* from everlasting.

† Heb. *from then.*

PSALM XCIII.

This psalm has no superscription in the Hebrew. In the LXX. the title is "For the day preceding the Sabbath, when the world had been peopled or established (ὅτε κατῴκισται, al. κατῴκιστο, ἡ γῆ). A song of praise by David." The former part of the title agrees with the Talmudic tradition, which regards this as the Friday's psalm, because God on the 6th day had finished His work, and had begun to reign over His creatures. (See 'Rosh hash-shanah,' 31*a*, quoted by Delitzsch.) Hitzig and others have observed the connection of this psalm with *v.* 8 of Ps. xcii. Whatever historical allusions may be contained in *v.* 3 to the past or present assaults of the world-powers upon Israel, this psalm, the first of a remarkable series of theocratic psalms, anticipates the period of Jehovah's personal manifestation of Himself as the King of the whole earth. Cf. Apoc. xi. 15, 17, and xix. 6.

1. *The* LORD *reigneth*] Rather, "Jehovah is King," *i.e.* He now reigns; His kingdom is visibly established, His foes being made His footstool. LXX. Ὁ ΚΥΡΙΟΣ ἐβασίλευσεν: Prayer-Book Version, "The Lord is King." The verb in the same tense is commonly used to denote the beginning of a new reign. Cf. 1 K. i. 18, "Adonijah reigneth." Cf. also 1 K. xxii. 41; 2 K. iii. 1, xv. 13; 2 Chro. xxix. 1; in all of which places it is rendered in the A.V. "began to reign." The Theocracy, as has been observed by Delitzsch in his introduction to this psalm, had its first manifestation when Jehovah became the King of Israel (Exod. xv. 18), and it will receive its completion when the King of Israel becomes the King of a whole world subdued, both outwardly and inwardly, to Himself. The verb which is here rendered "is (or has become) King," or, as Delitzsch renders it, "is now King," is here used in reference to the inauguration of the Theocracy in its final and complete manifestation. This is the watchword of the theocratic psalms (cf. Pss. xcvi. 10, xcvii. 1, xcix. 1).

the LORD *is clothed with strength*, &c.] Rather, "Jehovah is clothed, He is girded with strength;" the noun being understood in the former case, and expressed only in the latter. Cf. Isai. lix. 17, "He put on righteousness as a breastplate;" also Isai. li. 9, "Put on strength, O arm of Jehovah;" also Isai. lxiii. 1. The verb translated, "He hath girded Himself," is a military term; cf. Isai. viii. 9.

the world also is stablished] Or, "therefore, the world is firmly established;" cf. Ps. xcvi. 10. The word rendered "world" (תֵּבֵל *tebel*, derived probably from the unused verb תבל, or יבל, in the sense of "to grow," "to be fruitful") corresponds to ἡ οἰκουμένη, S. Luke ii. 1; Heb. i. 6, and has special reference to

3 The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.

4 The LORD on high *is* mightier than the noise of many waters, *yea*, *than* the mighty waves of the sea.

5 Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O LORD, † for ever.

† Heb. *to length of days.*

the world as inhabited. The prophecy points to a time when the shaking of the earth and the troubling of its inhabitants foretold in Pss. lxxv. 3, xcvii. 4, xcix. 1 (cf. Isai. xxiv. 19, liv. 10), shall have subsided, when the things which can be shaken (Heb. xii. 27) shall have been removed, and the things which "cannot be shaken" shall be finally established. Having become the seat of Jehovah's kingdom, the world can no longer be shaken by the combined opposition of earth and hell. It is worth notice, as an illustration of the danger of bringing scripture to bear on scientific questions, that so able an expositor as Calvin appealed to this passage as a proof that the earth is motionless. (See Calvin in loc.)

2. *Thy throne is established of old*] The transition is abrupt, and brings into fuller view the predictive import of this series of psalms as referring to some future and signal manifestation of the sovereignty of Jehovah. (Cf. Pss. xxii. 28, xlv. 6; Zech. xiv. 9.) The clause may be interpreted, however, as denoting the certainty of Messiah's reign over a subjugated earth (cf. 2 S. vii. 16, where the words are almost identical, and Ps. lxxxix. 29, 36, 37), as determined by God's eternal and unchanging counsels.

3. *The floods have lifted up*] The word rendered "floods" commonly denotes the "rivers," but it is sometimes used of the sea in parallelism (cf. Ps. xxiv. 2; Jonah ii. 3), which, with its foaming and dashing waves, is also a fitting emblem of the powers of the world as arrayed in opposition to the kingdom of God. The three great world-powers by which the Israelites were successively oppressed are typically denoted by the three great rivers, the Nile, the Tigris, and the Euphrates. Thus *e.g.* in Isai. viii. 7, "Now therefore behold the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and mighty (the same word as in *v.* 4), even the king of Assyria," &c. Both the Nile and the Euphrates are designated by the word *Nahar*, without the article (Isai. xix. 5, vii. 20). In the dual the word is used to denote the Euphrates and the Tigris (Gen. xxiv. 10, &c.). Cf. also Jer. xlvi. 7, 8.

the floods lift up their waves] Or, "roaring." The noun here employed, which occurs in no other place, seems to denote primarily "collision," "dashing," and hence the din or noise produced by the breakers. The change of tense is significant, as denoting the continuance of the threatened dangers. Such a transition is natural if the psalm was composed in the time of Hezekiah. (See Excursus on Pss. xci.—c.)

4. *The LORD on high*, &c.] The construction of this verse is involved in considerable difficulty, but the general meaning is clear. It may be rendered thus: "More mighty than the voices of many waters, mighty (or, glorious) waters, the breakers of the sea, is Jehovah (throned) on high." Cf. Ps. lxxvi. 4; Isai. xxxiii. 21; also Ex. xv. 10, where the adjective rendered "mighty" in the A. V. is used of the waters in which the Egyptians sank. See Note at end.

5. *Thy testimonies are very sure*, &c.] Cf. Ps. lxxxix. 28, 37. The abruptness of the transition causes a difficulty in tracing the connection of thought. The meaning probably is that the glory of Jehovah which is now manifested in the vindication of His attributes of truth and holiness will be more fully revealed hereafter when He shall take to Himself His great power, and reign over a world reduced outwardly and inwardly into submission to His sceptre. S. John, in like manner, having foretold in Apoc. xxi. 1 the establishment of the new heaven and the new earth, records in *v.* 5 the divine command given to him to "write: for these words are true and faithful." Cf. also Apoc. xxii. 3, 4, 6. It should be noticed, however, that there is a similar transition in Ps. xix. 7 from God's works to His word, and a striking verbal coincidence between that verse and *v.* 5 of this psalm.

for ever] Lit. "for length of days," as in Ps. xxiii. 6.

NOTE on PSALM XCIII. 4.

The rhythm of the verse, especially when compared with the similar structure of the preceding and following verses, and the accentuation of most MSS. point to a somewhat different rendering from that which is given in the foot-note, viz.: "More glorious than the voices of many waters, than the glorious breakers of the sea, is Jehovah (throned) on high."

PSALM XCIV.

1 The prophet, calling for justice, complaineth of tyranny and impiety. 8 He teacheth God's providence. 12 He sheweth the blessedness of affliction. 16 God is the defender of the afflicted.

O LORD †God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, †shew thyself.

†Heb. *God of revenges.*

†Heb. *shine forth.*

2 Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud.

3 LORD, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph?

4 *How long* shall they utter *and* speak hard things? *and* all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?

5 They break in pieces thy people, O LORD, and afflict thine heritage.

6 They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless.

7 [a] Yet they say, The LORD shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard *it*.

[a] Ps. 10. 11, 13.

8 Understand, ye brutish among the people: and *ye* fools, when will ye be wise?

[b] Exod. 4. 11. Prov. 20. 12.

9 [b] He that planted the ear, shall

PSALM XCIV.

This psalm also is without title in the Heb. The inscription in the LXX. is "A lyric psalm of David, for the 4th day of the week." It is said to have been the Wednesday song in the temple liturgy. It was also used by the Jews on the 4th and 5th days of the Feast of Tabernacles. The connection with the preceding psalm is probably as follows. The prediction of Messiah's reign suggests (cf. Rev. vi. 10) the earnest prayer for the hastening of His coming, for the purpose of "rendering vengeance to His enemies," and "avenging the blood of His servants" (Deut. xxxii. 35, 41, 43). The verbal points of coincidence with Pss. xcii. and xciii. are numerous and striking. The supposition that it has reference to the oppression of foreign foes, which has led Delitzsch to regard it as a very late psalm, seems to be without foundation (see notes on *vv.* 4, 6, 7, 8, 20). The exactions and acts of injustice and oppression of which the Psalmist speaks, appear to be those of the nobles or chief men amongst the people, not of foreign invaders; and the whole character of the psalm corresponds with the state of things described in the early chapters of the prophecies of Isaiah. Cf. i. 23, x. 2.

1. *O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth*] Lit. "O God of vengeances, Jehovah." The intensive plural denotes the completeness of the recompence, as Jer. li. 56 (cf. Deut. xxxii. 35; Isai. xxxv. 4).

shew thyself] Some render, "hath shone forth," as Deut. xxxii. 2, and Ps. l. 2. But the next verse is a prayer, and therefore *v.* 1 may be so regarded, the final letter of the verb (viz. ה) being omitted before the same letter which begins the next word. So Hitzig and Olshausen, J.

2. *Lift up thyself*] Cf. Isai. xxxiii. 10.

render a reward, &c.] Cf. Jer. li. 56; Isai. xxxv. 4. There is probably an allusion, by way of contrast, to Ps. xciii. 1, where the word rendered "majesty" is cognate with that here rendered "proud."

3. *LORD, how long*, &c.] We may compare with this inquiry the cry of the souls under the altar, "How long, O Lord holy and true," &c., Apoc. vi. 10.

4. *How long shall they utter*, &c.] Rather, "They pour forth (*i.e.* cause to gush out like a stream), they speak wantonness (or defiance)."

all the workers of iniquity boast themselves] The verb (יתאמרו) may mean, "they exalt themselves like princes," *ut Emiri se gerunt* (Schultens); (cf. Isai. lxi. 6;) or, more probably, it means simply, "they carry themselves high," *i.e.* act proudly. Cf. Isai. xvii. 9, where the cognate noun denotes the top, or highest branch, of a tree. The twice-repeated "workers of iniquity" (here and in *v.* 16) looks back to the same twice-repeated phrase in Ps. xcii. 7, 9.

5. *They break in pieces*] *i.e.* "crush" or "oppress," probably in reference to xciii. 3, where the adverse powers are represented as lifting up their roaring, a form of the same root. The verb is used Isai. iii. 15, and Prov. xxii. 22, where it manifestly refers to the acts of domestic oppressors, not of foreign invaders.

6. *They slay the widow and the stranger*, &c.] Neither the acts nor the words recorded in this and the following verse are those of foreign oppressors. They would have had no special motive for the murder of the stranger and the fatherless; and "Jah," and "the God of Jacob," are not the words which would have been familiar to them.

8. *Understand, ye brutish among the people*, &c.] Or, "ye most foolish of the people" (the prep. ב being one of the modes of expressing the superlative degree in Heb. Cf. Song of Sol. i. 8; Lam. i. 1). The words rendered "brutish" and "fools" are the same which occur xcii. 6 (where see note). The words "among the people" (cf. Ps. lxviii. 35) afford additional proof that the reference is not to foreign oppressors, but to Israel.

he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?

10 He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, *shall not he know?*

c 1 Cor. 3. 20. 11 c The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they *are* vanity.

12 Blessed *is* the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law;

13 That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked.

14 For the LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance.

15 But judgment shall return unto righteousness: and all the upright in heart † shall follow it.

† Heb. shall be *after it.*

16 Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? *or* who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?

17 Unless the LORD *had been* my

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9. *shall he not hear?*] In allusion, as it seems, to the perverse words to which reference is made in *v.* 4.

shall he not see?] *i.e.* the deeds of violence and wrong recorded in *vv.* 5, 6. Everything which is good and excellent in the creature must be possessed in absolute perfection by the Creator.

10. *He that chastiseth*] Or, that "chasteneth (as in *v.* 12) the nations;" *i.e.* shall not He who does not suffer even the heathen to go unpunished visit the oppression of His own people by their brethren? Cf. Gen. xviii. 25; Job xii. 23, for similar allusions to God's providential and judicial administration of the heathen world.

he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?] Rather, "(even) He that teacheth man knowledge." The words in italics in the A.V. are needless. The argument is derived from God's moral government, as before from man's physical constitution.

11. *the thoughts of man*, &c.] See Note at end.

12. This verse affords no valid argument in favour of a late date, inasmuch as the purifying results of affliction, though more clearly brought to light in the later portions of the Old Testament, are distinctly recognized in the Pentateuch (cf. Deut. viii. 5); in many of the psalms of David; in the book of Proverbs (as *e.g.* Prov. iii. 12); and in a yet more striking manner in the book of Job. Cf. v. 17, &c.

and teachest him out of thy law] This psalm must have been written at a time when the law of God was in the hands of the writer. The law was known to Hezekiah, who "kept the commandments which the Lord commanded Moses" (2 K. xviii. 6). Cf. Isai. xxxiv. 16; 2 Tim. iii. 16.

13. *That thou mayest give him rest*, &c.] Lit. "To give (or afford) him rest from the days of evil;" *i.e.* "so that he shall not be disturbed by the days of evil." So Dr Kay. LXX. Τοῦ πραῦναι αὐτῷ ἀφ' ἡμερῶν πονηρῶν.

until the pit be digged for the wicked] Cf. Pss. ix. 15, xxxv. 7, 8; Prov. xxviii. 10. The word rendered "until" denotes the inevitableness of the doom reserved for the wicked, though "sentence against his evil work" is not always "executed speedily." Eccles. viii. 11. It may, however, have the meaning of *whilst*, as in Job i. 18. So Hitzig and Zunz.

14. *For the LORD*, &c.] The certainty of the final issue is confirmed by the "for" of this verse. This is the answer to the inquiry contained in *v.* 3. This verse should be compared with Jer. xii. 7, "I have *forsaken* mine house; I have *left* mine heritage" (where the same verbs occur in the Heb. as here, only in inverted order, and the noun rendered *heritage* is the same as that here rendered *inheritance*), and also with 1 S. xii. 22. S. Paul (Rom. xi. 2) argues the point nationally as regards the Jews, and affirms that "God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew." The words "His people" and "His inheritance" point back to *v.* 5. Both words occur in Deut. xxxii. 9.

15. *But judgment shall return unto righteousness*, &c.] Or, "For judgment must return to (*i.e.* finally issue in and be found in conformity with) right." The meaning seems to be that righteousness must eventually triumph over present injustice, and then all honest-hearted men shall rejoice in the attainment of that which has been long yearned after. The ways of God must be finally vindicated, and all the upright in heart shall see and acknowledge that there is "a reward for the righteous," and "a God who judges (righteously) in the earth" (Ps. lviii. 11). Cf. Isai. xlii. 3, "He shall bring forth judgment unto truth."

16. *Who will rise up for me*, &c.] The Psalmist sees no refuge in man, and turns only to God. Cf. Ps. xcii. 11. The verse may be understood also prophetically of the time of the final vindication of the divine administration spoken of in the preceding verse. For the construction cf. Exod. xiv. 25; Judg. vi. 31; Ps. lv. 19; and 2 Chro. xx. 6; and for the fuller construction, 2 K. xiii. 12.

help, my soul had [1]almost dwelt in silence.

18 When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O LORD, held me up.

19 In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.

20 Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law?

21 They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood.

22 But the LORD is my defence; and my God *is* the rock of my refuge.

23 And he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness; *yea*, the LORD our God shall cut them off.

[1] Or, *quickly.*

17. *had almost dwelt in silence*] Or, "had almost inhabited silence" (cf. Ps. xxxvii. 3, for the construction), *i.e.* the silence of the grave (cf. Ps. cxv. 17).

18. *When I said*] Or, "Though I have said," *i.e.* if in time of danger and apparent desertion I have said, "My foot tottereth" (as S. Peter afterwards said, "I perish"), the compassion of Jehovah has sustained me.

19. *my thoughts*] "My cares" or "anxieties" or "distractions;" cf. Ps. cxxxix. 23 (the only other place in which this word occurs).

20. *Shall the throne of iniquity*, &c.] *i.e.* the judgment-seat of unrighteousness or wickedness. There can be no fellowship between Jehovah's throne of righteousness (xciii. 2) and the holiness which becomes His house (xciii. 5, cf. also 2 Cor. vi. 14), and the judgment-seat of unrighteousness, or malignity, and the oppression described in this psalm as executed "by a law," or by statute, *i.e.* under the semblance of the administration of justice. This and the following verse afford further indication that it is internal and not external oppression to which the Psalmist refers.

21. *They gather themselves together against*] The verb thus rendered may mean, "they decide upon the life of the righteous" (so Fuerst), or, "they press in upon," *i.e.* "assail the righteous" (so Delitzsch).

the righteous, &c.] The word "righteous" is in the singular. Whether these words be distinctly Messianic or not, they received their literal accomplishment when the false witnesses rose up against our Lord, and when Pilate, whilst protesting his innocence of the "blood of this righteous man," gave sentence as His enemies required. The LXX. has αἷμα ἀθῷον. The words of Pilate were ἀθῷός εἰμι ἀπὸ τοῦ αἵματος τούτου (or τοῦ δικαίου τούτου), S. Matt. xxvii. 24.

22. *the rock of my refuge*] Cf. Ps. xviii. 2. The word rendered "defence" in this verse is there rendered "high tower."

23. *And he shall bring*, &c.] Rather, "And He turns back," or, "He has turned back upon them," denoting the certainty of the righteous retribution.

in their own wickedness] Rather, "by (or through) their own wickedness." The workers of iniquity (*vv.* 4, 16) are here represented as having fallen into the pit which they have dug for others. The iteration, as in *v.* 1 and in Ps. xcii. 9, adds emphasis to the prediction.

NOTE on PSALM XCIV. 11.

Some couple the last words of *v.* 10 with this verse, and read, "He that teacheth man knowledge, (even) Jehovah, knoweth the imaginations of man that they are vain." Others render, "for they (*i.e.* men) are vanity, or a breath" (cf. Pss. xxxix. 11, lxii. 9, cxliv. 4). But there is stronger authority for the A.V., the relative particle being commonly and rightly rendered elsewhere "that" (not "for"), after the same verbs (cf. Gen. xxxi. 32, xxxviii. 16; Exod. xxxiv. 29; Josh. viii. 14, &c.), whilst the other rendering would ordinarily require in the Heb. a transposition of the predicate and the subject. In 1 Cor. iii. 20 the words τῶν σοφῶν are substituted for the Heb. אדם and the LXX. τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

PSALM XCV.

1 *An exhortation to praise God,* 3 *for his greatness,* 6 *and for his goodness,* 8 *and not to tempt him.*

O COME, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

2 Let us [†]come before his pre-

[†] Heb. *prevent his face.*

PSALM XCV.

This psalm bears internal evidence of having been composed as an anthem for the temple-worship, and probably on some special occasion. It is entitled by the LXX. "A Psalm of David," and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (who quotes it, iii. 7—11, and iv. 3, 7) uses the expression "in David" with reference

sence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

3 For the LORD *is* a great God, and a great King above all gods.

4 † In his hand *are* the deep places of the earth: ‖ the strength of the hills *is* his also.

5 † The sea *is* his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry *land*.

6 O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.

7 For he *is* our God; and we *are* the people of his pasture, and the

† Heb. *In whose.* ‖ Or, *the heights of the hills are his.*

† Heb. *Whose the sea is.*

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to it; but this probably implies no more than that the words in question are a quotation from the Book of Psalms, of which David was, to a considerable extent, the author, just as "the Psalms" is used in the New Testament as a synonym for the Hagiographa, because the Psalms formed the first portion of that division of the Old Testament Scriptures. The phraseology, as the psalm now stands, does not appear to be that of David, though it is quite possible that, in its original form, it may have proceeded from him. The principal Jewish writers interpret this and the following psalms up to Ps. c. of the Messiah. This psalm is one of the Friday evening psalms in the synagogue service. It has been used from a remote period in the daily services of the Western Churches, as it is still in our own, in which it has been generally known as the Invitatory Psalm, a designation evidently derived from the invitations to the worship of God contained in *vv.* 1, 2, and 6, but perhaps not without reference to the fact that the Sabbath is regarded by the Jews as "the Bride," whom by the use of this psalm, at the beginning of the Sabbath, they are supposed to go out to meet. (Cf. *v.* 2.) The psalm consists of two clearly defined portions; (1) an invitation to praise, in grateful acknowledgment of God's mercies; (2) a solemn warning applicable, primarily, to the Jewish Church and nation, but, as the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews testifies, a warning to the Christian Church also, against the sins of unbelief and disobedience. The connecting links with Ps. xciv. are found in xcv. 1, compared with xciv. 22; xcv. 7 compared with xciv. 14, 23; and, perhaps, in the desire to enter into the divine presence expressed in xcv. 2, 6, as contrasted with the desire to escape the divine observation expressed in xciv. 7.

1. *let us sing*] "Exult," or "shout joyfully." In this verse, as in *v.* 6, an outward expression of worship is required of the faithful in the utterance of the voice and the bowing of the knees (so Calvin, in loc.).

2. *Let us come before his presence*] Rather, "Let us go forth to meet Him," *i.e.* anticipate His presence. Cf. Ps. lvii. 8, where the Psalmist is represented as awakening the morning with his thanks and praise. The verse may be regarded as the Christian's reply to the inquiry, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord?" Mic. vi. 6, and it is illustrated by Ps. l. 23, "Whoso offereth (lit. sacrificeth) praise (the same word which is here rendered thanksgiving and which means also a thank-offering; cf. Ps. c. 1, 4, and the notes in loc.) glorifieth me."

psalms] "Songs" or "hymns;" cf. 2 S. xxiii. 1.

3. *above all gods*] Cf. Ex. xviii. 11; Pss. lxxxvi. 8, xcii. 8, xciii. 4, xcvi. 4; Jer. x. 10, 11. The LXX. add ὅτι οὐκ ἀπώσεται Κύριος τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ.

4. *In his hand*, &c.] Rather, "in Whose hand;" or, "because in His hand," &c.

deep places] Or, "unsearchable, unexplored recesses;" here probably the lower places of the earth; Sym. κατώτατα γῆς; Jer. fundamenta terræ; as contrasted with the higher places of the second clause.

strength] Or, "heights," LXX. τὰ ὕψη; Jer. altitudines montium. See Note at end.

5. *The sea is his*] Rather, "Whose is the sea," or "to Whom belongeth the sea."

6. *let us worship*] The word means "prostrate oneself upon the earth," in accordance with the oriental mode of adoration.

our maker] A comparison of this passage with Deut. xxxii. 15, 18, where we find Jehovah spoken of as the Rock of Israel's salvation (as in *v.* 1), and as the "God which made him," seems to warrant the inference that it is to the constitution or adoption of Israel as the people of the Lord rather than to the literal creation of man that both Moses and the Psalmist have reference. (Cf. Isai. xliii. 21, xliv. 2.)

7. *For he is our God*] The argument here reaches its climax in the personal relationship of God to His people as their covenant God. Cf. Ps. xlviii. 14. The identity of Jehovah, as the Great King, with the Covenant Angel Who went before the Israelites, cf. Exod. xxiii. 20—23, ("Beware of Him, and obey His voice;" and again, "If thou shalt indeed obey His voice,") seems to be clearly implied in this verse. Hence, an argument for the worship of Christ as the Angel of the Old Covenant with outward and inward homage is derived from this psalm.

To day, &c.] Or, "This day." "Often as they were faithless the 'to-day' sounded ever anew" (so Tholuck, in loc.). Cf. 2 Cor. vi. 2. The position of the word gives it emphasis. The apodosis seems to be wanting (then it

sheep of his hand. [a] To day if ye will hear his voice,

8 Harden not your heart, [b] as in the [†] provocation, *and* as *in* the day of temptation in the wilderness:

9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work.

10 Forty years long was I grieved with *this* generation, and said, It *is* a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways:

11 Unto whom I sware in my wrath [†] that they should not enter into my rest.

[a] Hebr. 3. 7. & 4. 7.

[b] Exod. 17. 2, 7. Numb. 14. 22. &c.

[†] Heb. *contention.*

[†] Heb. *if they enter into my rest.*

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shall be well with you), according to the Masoretic punctuation, which makes the divine voice of admonition begin in the middle of this verse.

if ye will hear] Rather, "listen to," or "obey." See Note at end.

8. *Harden not your heart*] The hardening of the heart, which, in the case of Pharaoh (Ex. vii. 3, where the word is the same as here), is ascribed to God, is here ascribed to man.

as in the provocation, &c.] Rather, **as at Meribah; as in the day of Massah.** The LXX. has ἐν τῷ παραπικρασμῷ; so also Heb. iii. 8. The context seems to limit the reference to the event recorded in Exod. xvii. 1—7 which took place at Rephidim. The Meribah of Num. xx. is distinguished from the Meribah of Rephidim as Meribah-Kadesh; and it is the Meribah of Ex. xvii. which alone bore the double name of Massah and Meribah. (Cf. Ps. lxxxi. 7.)

9. *When*] As Deut. xi. 6; or, "where," LXX. οὗ, as in Num. xx. 13; Deut. viii. 15; Ps. lxxxiv. 3. Cf. Heb. iii. 9.

and saw] Or, "even though they saw" (or "had seen"). Cf. "yea (or although), they may forget," Isai. xlix. 15.

my work] The LXX. and Heb. iii. 9 have "my works." The difference affects the punctuation only.

10. *Forty years long*] In Heb. iii. 9 these words are connected with the preceding clause, but in the 17th verse, as here, they denote the time during which God was grieved. In the Heb. and the LXX. it is simply a question of division, not affecting the text.

was I grieved] Or, "moved with indignation." LXX. προσώχθισα. The Heb. future is used here, as elsewhere, to denote that which is customary or continuous. See Ewald's 'Heb. Gr.' § 264 (Nicholson's ed.).

with this generation] Lit. "with a generation," *i.e.* with a whole generation.

a people that do err in their heart] Lit. "a people of wanderers in heart (are) they." The same word is used Ps. cvii. 4, of the wanderings of the Israelites in the desert.

and they have not known my ways] Or, "even they knew not My ways;" in allusion probably to the way in which the people were brought out of Egypt and led by the Angel (cf. Exod. xiii. 17, 18, and xxiii. 20). The word "they" is emphatic.

11. *Unto whom*] Rather, "so that" (as in Gen. xi. 7) or "wherefore." The four verses 4, 5, 9, and 11, begin with the same word, which may be rendered "when," "where," "so that," or "wherefore," according to the connection. Cf. Gen. xiii. 16; Deut. xxviii. 27. The artificial construction forbids rigorous uniformity of rendering. It may be observed further that the last four verses of this psalm begin with the same letter of the alphabet.

that they should not enter into my rest] Lit. "if they shall come;" the common form of an oath in Heb. The reference is to the fundamental passage Num. xiv. 23, "if they shall see the land which I sware unto their fathers." Cf. Num. xiv. 30; Deut. i. 35, xii. 9. The rest here spoken of answers to the land in the above passages, and must therefore denote a place of rest. These words prove the typical character of the land of Canaan. The same train of thought is expanded in Heb. iii. and iv. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews grounds upon the renewal in this psalm of the promise and the warning given to the Israelites, the inference that the true rest promised to the faithful, "God's rest" in the highest and fullest sense of the words, is yet future. "There remaineth therefore a rest (σαββατισμὸς) to the people of God." iv. 9.

NOTES on PSALM XCV. 4 and 7.

4. It is probable that תוֹעֲפֹת is transposed from תּוֹפָעֹת, and that it is derived from יפע "to glitter," "appear afar off," "be prominent," rather than from יעף "to faint," or "be weary from labour." In this case the use of the word in reference to high places, as apparent from a distance, seems easy of explanation. The same word is used of the wild bull, or buffalo, Num. xxiii. 22, xxiv. 8, apparently in the sense of *strength*. It is also used in Job xxii. 25, where see note.

7. If the optative sense of the particle here employed could be established, the words might be rendered, "Oh! that ye would hearken to His voice!" but this signification is extremely doubtful, and Exod. xxiii. 22 seems to point to the other construction, as in the A.V. This construction is confirmed by Heb. iii. 7, and iv. 7, Σήμερον ἐὰν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ ἀκούσητε, μὴ σκληρύνητε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν: where the LXX. version is followed in connecting the two clauses.

PSALM XCVI.

1 *An exhortation to praise God,* 4 *for his greatness,* 8 *for his kingdom,* 11 *for his general judgment.*

[a] 1 Chron. 16. 23.

O [a] SING unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth.

2 Sing unto the LORD, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day.

3 Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.

4 For the LORD *is* great, and greatly to be praised: he *is* to be feared above all gods.

5 For all the gods of the nations

PSALM XCVI.

This psalm has been rightly designated as a missionary hymn for all ages. Its liturgical character is decisively attested both by internal and external evidence. It is entitled by the LXX. "A Song of David;" and if the commonly received interpretation of 1 Chro. xvi. 7 be correct, the occasion of the composition of this psalm, in its original form, was the removal of the ark from the house of Obed-edom to the tent which David had prepared for it on Mount Zion.

But whether the psalm was originally composed by David or not (a point which 1 Chro. xvi. does not seem absolutely to determine), there is ground for believing that, as it here stands (and as with slight verbal discrepancies it is found in 1 Chro. xvi.), this psalm is the production of a later period than that of David. For (1) the LXX. connect the psalm with the building of the second temple, intending, as it would seem, to denote its adaptation to that occasion. (2) The subject-matter and the phraseology, more particularly the *anadiplosis* or iteration of the psalm, *i.e.* the repetition of the same words, or of the same phrases, point to a later date than that of David. (3) It is found in 1 Chro. xvi. in close connection with portions of the cvth, cvith and cviith psalms, and the composite psalm of praise there recorded ends with the doxology, slightly varied, which closes the 4th Book of the Psalter. Like the preceding psalm, to which it is joined in four codices, this psalm is predictive of "the gospel of the kingdom" (S. Matt. ix. 35); but, whether the first and second Advents of the Messiah be or be not regarded here, as in other Old Test. prophecies, as parts of one connected whole, this psalm has reference to the coming of the Messiah as David's Lord, not as David's Son; as Jehovah, the Lord and King of the whole earth; not as the "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

The first portion of the psalm naturally divides itself into two strophes, each consisting of six lines. The remaining portion, beginning with *v.* 10, may either be divided into two similar strophes, each consisting of two verses, or it may be regarded as one irregular strophe of eleven lines. The former division is the more natural as well as the more symmetrical. The disorganization of the strophical structure in 1 Chro. xvi., as well as the composite character of the whole piece, seems to point to the earlier date of that form of the psalm which is preserved in the Psalter. The concluding verses of the psalm abound with allusions to the prophecies of Isaiah. The phraseology is, for the most part, borrowed from that prophet, and the repeated instances of iteration remind us forcibly of his style.

1. The opening words are found verbatim in Isai. xlii. 10. Rashi observes, that wherever the expression occurs, "a new song," it refers to the future, *i.e.* to the time of the Messiah. It is true that the phrase "a new song" occurs in Ps. xl. 3, which is ascribed to David, and that the fuller expression "sing unto Him a new song" is found in Ps. xxxiii. 3, but the phraseology of the latter psalm, and its mention of horses, seem to point to a later date of composition than the time of David (see note on xxxiii. 17). The "new song" is not the psalm itself, but the ascription of praise which shall ascend from a regenerated world at the Advent of Jehovah predicted in *v.* 13. (Cf. Rev. xv. 3.)

2. *shew forth*] This verb, though not exclusively used by Isaiah, is employed by him in a distinctive sense as denoting the proclamation of the gospel. (Cf. Isai. lii. 7, lx. 6.) (It answers to the Greek word εὐαγγελίζεσθε. The title of the gospels in the Hebrew New Testament, corresponding to εὐαγγέλιον, is derived from the same root.)

from day to day] *i.e.* "every day;" cf. Esther iii. 7.

3. *the heathen*] Or, "the nations."

his wonders] This word is frequently employed with reference to the miracles wrought in Egypt and in the wilderness.

all people] Lit. "all the peoples," or "nations."

4. *For the LORD is great*, &c.] The former clause of this verse is taken verbatim from Ps. xlviii. 1; the second clause seems to refer back to Ps. xlvii. 2.

greatly to be praised] *i.e.* worthy to be celebrated in festive songs.

all gods] Cf. 2 Chro. xxxii. 15, where the singular form occurs.

5. *For all the gods of the nations are idols*] This verse shews that the word translated

are idols: but the LORD made the heavens.

6 Honour and majesty *are* before him: strength and beauty *are* in his sanctuary.

7 Give unto the LORD, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and strength.

8 Give unto the LORD the glory †*due unto* his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts. † Heb. *of his name.*

9 O worship the LORD ‖in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth. ‖ Or, *in the glorious sanctuary.*

10 Say among the heathen *that* [b]the LORD reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: he shall judge the people righteously. [b] Ps. 93. 1. & 97. 1.

"gods" in the preceding verse is rightly so rendered, and not, as some propose, "angels." The word rendered "idols" means "powerless things," or "vanities;" not as LXX. δαιμόνια; and Jerome, *dæmonia*. It is used more frequently by Isaiah than by any other writer; cf. ii. 8, 18, 20, x. 10, xix. 3. The statement is similar to that of S. Paul in 1 Cor. viii. 4, "an idol is nothing." We may compare with it Isai. xli. 24, xliv. 9, 10. The utter vanity and incapacity of the gods of the nations is contrasted with the might and majesty of the Creator. The word rendered "nations" is the same which is rendered "people" in *v.* 3; or, as it is literally translated, "peoples." It is a different word from that which is rendered "heathen" in *vv.* 3, 10.

made the heavens] Cf. Isai. xlii. 5, xliv. 24.

6. *Honour and majesty*] The paronomasia of the Hebrew is lost in the translation.

Instead of "strength and beauty are in His *sanctuary*," we read in 1 Chro. xvi. 27, "strength and gladness are in His *place*." It is remarkable that in Isai. lx. 13, where the Gentiles are represented as bringing their offerings into the courts of the Lord's house, the two words are combined, "to beautify the *place* of my *sanctuary*," where also the verb translated "beautify" is that from which the noun here rendered "beauty" is derived. The reference in the word which is here rendered "sanctuary" (which is used both of the tabernacle and the temple) is clearly to the earthly sanctuary; and hence it seems probable that the psalm was composed before the Captivity, the word rendered "strength" having special reference to the ark, and the word rendered "before Him" having a similar reference to the Shechinah, or manifested glory of Jehovah in the most holy place; neither of which seems to have belonged to the second temple.

7. *Give unto the* LORD...*glory and strength*] *i.e.* ascribe to Jehovah glory and strength in a song of praise. The words are borrowed from Ps. xxix. 1, as are the following words from the next verse of the same psalm. The sudden change in construction is, as Dr Phillips observes, highly poetical, and seems to imply that this and the following verses would be taken up by a different part of the choir.

8. *the glory due unto his name*] Lit. "the glory of His name."

bring an offering] A collective singular, in allusion to the eastern custom of bringing gifts when admitted into the presence of kings and rulers. The word "minchah" appears to be here used, not in the restricted sense of a vegetable offering, which belongs to it in the Levitical law, but in the more comprehensive sense in which we find it used both in Gen. iv. 3, and also by the prophets. Cf. Ps. cxli. 2 and note in loc.

his courts] A probable indication that the psalm, in the form in which it is here found, was written later than the time of David; see note on Ps. xcii. 13.

9. *the beauty of holiness*] The quotation from the xxixth ps. is here continued. There seems to be an allusion to *v.* 6, where the word rendered "majesty" is the masculine form of that here rendered "beauty," and the word rendered "sanctuary" is derived from the same root as the word here rendered "holiness." For the meaning of the phrase see note on Ps. xxix. 2. The beauty of holiness may be compared, as by Delitzsch, to the wedding-garment of the New Testament parable.

fear before him] Or, "tremble before Him," as Ps. xcvii. 4.

10. *Say among the heathen*, &c.] Rather, "Say among the nations, Jehovah is King." Cf. Ps. xciii. 1 (where see note), also xcvii. 1, xcix. 1. An ancient gloss, but without authority from existing MSS., or ancient versions, viz. ἀπὸ τοῦ ξύλου, was received by S. Justin Martyr and others as a genuine portion of the text. The Psalmist is here again carried onward by the inspiring Spirit into the great day of the Lord, and calls upon the faithful to proclaim the personal Advent of Jehovah and His assumption of the kingdom.

the world also shall be established] Or, "the world also is stable, or is established." This clause is quoted verbatim from Ps. xciii. 1. It looks back apparently to *v.* 5, in which mention is made of the heavens, and is the link between that verse and the 11th, in which mention is made both of the heavens and earth. We find the order of this and some other clauses changed in 1 Chro. xvi.

11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.

12 Let the field be joyful, and all that *is* therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice

13 Before the LORD: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.

PSALM XCVII.

1 *The majesty of God's kingdom.* 7 *The church rejoiceth at God's judgments upon idolaters.* 10 *An exhortation to godliness and gladness.*

THE LORD reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the † multitude of isles be glad *thereof.*

† Heb. *many*, or, *great isles.*

it shall not be moved] Or, "it is unshaken." This may be understood of exemption either from moral or from physical causes of disturbance; cf. Ps. xlvi. 5. See note on Ps. lx. 2.

he shall judge the people righteously] Lit. "He shall judge (or He judges) peoples in righteousness or equity," *i.e.* He shall realise in His equitable administration of the world the types imperfectly afforded in the administration of Israel's most upright judges; cf. Gen. xxx. 6, where the same word (a different word from that in *v.* 13) is used in the sense of avenging the cause of Rachel. It means also to punish, Gen. xv. 14. Cf. Pss. vii. 8, ix. 8, lxxii. 2.

11. *Let the heavens rejoice*, &c.] Or, "The heavens rejoice, and the earth exults: the sea roars and its fulness." Cf. Isai. xlii. 10, where the last clause occurs. As the whole creation, both animate and inanimate, has groaned beneath the weight of the curse, so shall the whole creation partake of the great deliverance. Many of Isaiah's prophecies have reference to this subject, *e.g.* xxxv. 1, xlii. 10, xliv. 23, xlv. 8, xlix. 13, lv. 12; and S. Paul (Rom. viii. 21) distinctly asserts the same truth. The analogy between S. Luke xxi. 25, "the sea and the waves roaring," and the second clause of this verse, is rather apparent than real. A closer analogy is furnished in Ps. xcviii. 7, where the same phrase occurs, and is shewn by comparison with *v.* 8, "Let the floods clap their hands," &c. to be a sound of joy and exultation.

12. *then*] Or, "at that time." The word thus translated, as in Isai. xxxv. 5, 6, looks forward to the times of the Messiah's Advent.

all the trees of the wood] This seems evidently borrowed from Isai. xliv. 23 and lv. 12.

rejoice] Or, "sing joyously;" so Dr Kay.

13. *for he cometh*] Or, "is come." The words rendered "He shall judge (or rather He judges) the world with righteousness," are taken from Ps. ix. 8.

PSALM XCVII.

The key-note of this series of psalms, "Jehovah is King," is again sounded in the first verse. The subject is the same as in the preceding psalm, viz. the personal Advent of Jehovah, which is represented in terms borrowed from the Pentateuch, and from those earlier psalms which describe the Theophany on occasion of the giving of the law. All nature is moved at the divine presence. The flames which once lighted up Mount Sinai, at the appearance of the great King enlighten the whole world; and by them His enemies, "who would not that He should reign over them," are consumed. The heavens which now proclaim the glory of God shall then attest His righteousness. His glory is displayed throughout the whole earth; and, whilst the worshippers of false gods are confounded, Zion rejoices and is glad; and all nations come and worship before their King; for His judgments are made manifest (Rev. xv. 4).

Whether the quotation in Heb. i. 6 be from this psalm or not, and whether the reference of the writer be to the first, or to the second, introduction into the world of the First-begotten (see note on *v.* 7), the psalm itself contains conclusive evidence that it reaches forward not only to the first Advent of Christ, but also from thence to "the consummation of all things." (See Bp. Wordsworth in loc.) It must be observed, at the same time, that not only the phraseology of this psalm, but also the analogy of other psalms, suggest the probability that its *immediate* occasion was some great national deliverance, which it was the object of the writer to commemorate in this and the other Liturgical Anthems which precede and follow it.

The psalm naturally divides itself into four strophes, each consisting of three verses.

The connecting links with Ps. xcvi. are numerous; *vv.* 1, 8 of Ps. xcvii. answer to *v.* 11 of Ps. xcvi.; *v.* 3, "before Him," corresponds with *v.* 6; *v.* 4 with *v.* 9, where the verb rendered "tremble" in the former case, and "fear" in the latter, in the A.V., is the same in the Heb.; *v.* 6, "all the people see His glory," with *v.* 3, "declare His glory among the heathen;" *v.* 7 (where the idols are contrasted with the true Elohim) with *v.* 5; *v.* 9, "Thou art exalted far above all gods," answers to "He is to be feared above all gods," *v.* 4 of Ps. xcvi.

1. *The* LORD *reigneth*] See note on Ps. xciii. 1.

let the earth rejoice] Or, "the earth is glad;"

2 Clouds and darkness *are* round about him: [a] righteousness and judgment *are* the [1] habitation of his throne.

3 A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about.

4 His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled.

5 The hills melted like wax at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.

6 The heavens declare his right-

[a] Ps. 89. 14.
[1] Or, *establishment.*

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not the land of Canaan only, but (as in *v.* 11 of the preceding psalm, and as further explained by the words which immediately follow, and by *vv.* 5 and 9) the whole earth, including both the animate and inanimate creation. Cf. Isai. xlii. 10—12.

let the multitude of isles be glad] Lit. "many isles rejoice" (cf. Ps. xcvi. 11). The word "many" is used here as elsewhere (Isai. lii. 15, liii. 12; cf. Rom. v. 15, 19; Heb. ix. 28) for *all*. The Hebrew writers appear to have used the word rendered *isles* to denote all those countries which were separated from themselves by the sea. (Cf. Gen. x. 5, and the note on it; Ps. lxxii. 10; Isai. xli. 1, 5, xlii. 4, 10, 12, xlix. 1; Jer. xxv. 22, xxxi. 10.) Thus the inhabitants of the isles became synonymous with the Gentile world, as appears from the fact that Isai. xlii. 4, "the isles shall wait for His law," is explained in S. Matt. xii. 21 by the words "in His name shall the *Gentiles* trust." This is indicated also by the parallelisms which are found in several of the passages to which reference is made above.

2. *Clouds and darkness*] The same words, as also "fire," which occurs in *v.* 3, are found in Deut. iv. 11, and v. 22, with reference to the giving of the law on Mount Sinai. In the former of these passages another Hebrew word occurs which is translated "darkness," and the word which is used here is there rendered "thick darkness." Cf. Exod. xix. 16, 18; Ps. xviii. 9, 11, 12. Clouds and darkness do not belong to the divine nature, but are characteristic of the divine dispensations. "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all;" but "His way is in the sea, and His path in the great waters: and His footsteps are not known."

the habitation of his throne] Rather, "the foundation or basis of His throne," *i.e.* on which His throne rests. The words are taken from Ps. lxxxix. 14. Cf. Ps. civ. 5; Ezra ii. 68.

3. *A fire*] Rather, "Fire," by which God is represented, ("our God is a consuming fire,") or "lightning." Cf. Exod. ix. 23, and the footnote in loc.; also S. Matt. xxiv. 27. A similar expression occurs in Ps. l. 3. The same order of events is marked in both psalms. In Ps. l. we read first of the devouring fire (*v.* 3), and then of the gathering together of the saints (*v.* 5). In this psalm we find first a description of the destruction of the enemies (*v.* 3), and then of the rejoicing of Zion (*v.* 8). Our Lord confirms both the general truth of the prediction, and also the order of the events foretold in both psalms, when, in His prophecy of the end of the world, He thus describes the command which will be given to the reapers, "Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn" (S. Matt. xiii. 30).

4. *His lightnings enlightened*, &c.] Or, "have enlightened." The Psalmist describes the scene as if actually present to his view. The same expression occurs in Ps. lxxvii. 18, in connection with the passage through the Red Sea (cf. Hab. iii. throughout). Our Lord confirms this prediction also in the description of His own Advent (S. Luke xvii. 24).

5. *The hills melted like wax*, &c.] Or, "are molten." Cf. Mic. i. 4. The frequent allusions in this series of psalms to the convulsions of the earth, as in *v.* 4, and in this verse to the melting of the hills, suggest the idea that some great earthquake, like that in the days of king Uzziah, was fresh in the memory of the writer (cf. Amos i. 1). Other passages in the writings of the prophets connect the levelling of the mountains with the personal Advent of the Lord, as *e.g.* Isai. xl. 4, 5, and Zech. xiv. 4, 5, where express reference is made, by way of illustration, to the great earthquake in the days of Uzziah. (See Excursus on this series of psalms.)

at the presence of the LORD, &c.] Rather, "by reason of the presence of Jehovah, of the presence of the Lord of the whole earth." The double appellation probably denotes the Advent of the Lord in His twofold aspect—both as the Judge and also as the Avenger—to judge and to take vengeance on His enemies, to judge and to avenge the cause of His people. This appears to be one of the few passages in the Old Testament in which the predictions of the Advent of the promised Messiah and of Jehovah Himself no longer run, as they do for the most part, in parallel lines, but converge to one point. (See Delitzsch on Isai. xl. 10, and Introd. to the Psalter, § 18.) Cf. Isai. xxviii. 16. The phrase "Lord of the whole earth" occurs elsewhere only five times in the Old Testament, viz. Josh. iii. 11, 13; Mic. iv. 13; and Zech. iv. 14, vi. 5. The full expression would be, "by reason of the presence of Jehovah, by reason of the presence of Jehovah, the Lord of the whole earth," *i.e.* of the earth now completely reduced into obedience to His sceptre.

eousness, and all the people see his glory.

[b] Exod. 20. 4. Lev. 26. 1. Deut. 5. 8. Hebr. 1. 6.

7 [b] Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all *ye* gods.

8 Zion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of thy judgments, O LORD.

9 For thou, LORD, *art* high above all the earth: thou art exalted far above all gods.

[c] Ps. 34. 14. Amos 5. 15. Rom. 12. 9.

10 Ye that love the LORD, [c] hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.

11 Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.

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6. *The heavens declare his righteousness*] Rather, "have declared." The same expression occurs in Ps. l. 6. It may refer to some supernatural attestation of the sovereignty of the Judge.

all the people see his glory] Rather, "all the peoples, or nations have seen his glory." Presuming that the prophecies of Isaiah were composed before this psalm (see Excursus), these words are the echo of many passages in those prophecies in which the universal manifestation of the glory of the Lord at His second Advent is foretold in almost identical terms, as *e.g.* xl. 5, "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together;" and lxvi. 18, "I will gather all nations and tongues, and they shall come and see My glory."

7. *Confounded be all they*, &c.] Rather, "Ashamed are (or, be) all they, the worshippers of images, who boast themselves of idols (or idol-gods)." The verbal resemblance to Isai. xlii. 17, and xliv. 9, should be observed. Cf. Jer. x. 14. S. Augustine, in his commentary on this passage, thus describes the confusion of idolaters in his own day: "Erubescant qui adorant lapides, quia lapides illi mortui erant, nos vivum lapidem invenimus!...Dimittunt templa, currunt ad ecclesias. Confundantur omnes qui adorant sculptilia. Adhuc quærunt adorare sculptilia, noluerunt deserere idola, deserti sunt ab idolis." The same confusion, as some think, is yet more graphically described in Rev. vi. 12—17.

worship him, all ye gods] This clause may be rendered imperatively, as in the A.V., "Bow down before Him, all ye gods," or affirmatively, "All gods have bowed down before Him." The LXX. read προσκυνήσατε αὐτῷ πάντες ἄγγελοι αὐτοῦ. The Vulg., "Adorate eum angeli ejus." The Syr. also understands the passage of the angels. Both usage and context, however, seem opposed to this interpretation. As regards usage, there seems to be no clear instance in which the word *Elohim* is employed to denote, as its primary signification, the angels. (See note on Ps. viii. 5.) As regards the context, it seems clear that the allusion here (as in Pss. xcv. 3, xcvi. 5, and *v.* 9 of this psalm) is primarily to those cosmical powers which had been deified not only in the Gentile world, but also by many of the Jews, who, at all periods of their history before the Captivity, were prone to lapse into idolatry. Cf. Acts vii. 42 (to which early idolatrous worship there is no reference in the Pentateuch); also 2 K. xxi. 3, 5; Jer. xix. 13; Zeph. i. 5. Jerome renders the clause thus: *Adorate eum omnes dii.* Inasmuch, however, as angels may have become the objects of idolatrous worship in the days of the Psalmist, there seems to be no sufficient reason for excluding a reference to them in this place, in support of which reference Heb. i. 6 may be urged, which (if not taken from the addition found in all codices of the LXX. to Deut. xxxii. 43) is a direct quotation from this verse. The words with which the citation is introduced, if the reference be to this psalm, have an important bearing upon its interpretation. Dr Kay renders them thus: "When He again introduces His First-born into the world, He says:" words which, as has been fully shewn by Delitzsch and others, must be referred, both on grammatical and exegetical grounds, not to the Incarnation, but to the Second Advent.

8. *Zion heard, and was glad*] These words are borrowed almost verbatim from Ps. xlviii. 11. They describe in glowing terms the joy of the Church at the coming of her Lord; in accordance with His own words as recorded in S. Luke xxi. 28, "Then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." The very same verbs which are used in *v.* 1, to denote the joy of the earth at large, are here employed as descriptive of that of Zion.

9. *high above all the earth*] These words are taken verbatim from Ps. lxxxiii. 18. It should be remarked that the Hebrew word translated "Most High," and the word translated "Thou art exalted," are cognate in their etymology. Cf. Ps. xlvii. 2, 9.

10. *hate evil*, &c.] The promised deliverance of Jehovah is a reason for the hatred and avoidance of evil. Cf. Pss. xxxiv. 14, 16, 21, xxxvii. 27, 28.

he preserveth, &c.] Or, if the accentuation be disregarded, "He Who preserveth the souls of His saints will deliver them from the hand of the wicked." So Delitzsch.

11. *Light is sown for the righteous*] The LXX. has ἀνέτειλε, *i.e.* is sprung up. This

12 Rejoice in the LORD, ye right-
‖ Or, *to the memorial.* eous; and give thanks ‖at the remembrance of his holiness.

PSALM XCVIII.

1 *The psalmist exhorteth the Jews,* 4 *the Gentiles,* 7 *and all the creatures to praise God.*

A Psalm.

O SING unto the LORD a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory.

2 [a]The LORD hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he ‖openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.
[a] Isai. 52. 10.
‖ Or, *revealed.*

3 He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of

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is based on a different reading (זרה, instead of זרע), which seems to have had its origin in the parallel passage in Ps. cxii. 4. There seems, however, to be no necessity for changing the received text, which contains a beautiful and expressive figure. Cf. Prov. xi. 18; Hos. viii. 7, x. 12; S. James iii. 18. The light, now sown for the righteous, shall spring up in that day, when unto those that fear His name "the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings." Cf. "Et jam prima novo spargebat lumine terras," 'Æn.' IV. 584; also, "spargit lumine terras," Lucret. II. 143, and "lumine conserit arva," ib. 211. Milton also uses the same figure of the dew:

"Now morn, her rosy steps in th' Eastern clime
Advancing, sow'd the earth with orient pearl." 'Paradise Lost,' v. 1, 2.

Hitzig compares *κίδνανται* and *σκίδνανται*, used of the dawn and of the sun.

the righteous] Lit. "the righteous (man);" a collective singular.

12. *Rejoice in the* LORD, &c.] Cf. *vv.* 1, 8, where the same verb is rendered "be glad," and *v.* 11, where the cognate noun is rendered "gladness." The first clause of the verse is found almost verbatim in Ps. xxxii. 11, and the second clause verbatim in Ps. xxx. 4.

at the remembrance, &c.] See Ps. xxx. 4 and Note.

PSALM XCVIII.

This is the only psalm of the series, beginning with the 93rd and ending with the 99th, which bears any inscription in the Hebrew, and it is the only psalm throughout the Psalter which bears as its inscription the single word "Mizmor," *i. e.* psalm. The primary meaning of the verb from which *mizmor* is derived is to *cut* or *prune*. Mendelssohn says that "it is right that it should be applied to the song which is accompanied by a musical instrument, in the case where the song is divided by means of this accompaniment into different portions." The clearly marked division of this psalm into three strophes, each consisting of three verses, which was probably indicated in its liturgical use by means of the instrumental accompaniments, confirms the probability of the accuracy of this definition. The inscription in the LXX. is "A Psalm of David." In the Syriac the inscription is, "Of the redemption of the people from Egypt." It should be observed, however, that the deliverance from Egypt is but a type of the deliverance promised in this psalm, and that "the new song" of *v.* 1 is not the song of Moses, as recorded in Exod. xv., but "the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb," Rev. xv. 3. The beginning and the end of the psalm are taken from the 96th; and the resemblance throughout is so striking that there can be little doubt of the identity of authorship. The psalm abounds, even more than the other psalms of this series, with expressions borrowed from earlier psalms, and from the prophecies of Isaiah, especially the later prophecies. (See Excursus on these psalms.) Its composite character points to its *comparatively* late date. Amongst the points of connection with Ps. xcvi. the following may be mentioned. Both psalms begin with the same words. The "marvellous things," *v.* 1, may be compared with xcvi. 3, where the same Hebrew word is translated "wonders:" the words "in the sight of the heathen," or "Gentiles," *v.* 2, with xcvi. 3: the "righteousness" and "truth" of *vv.* 2, 3, with the display of the same attributes foretold in xcvi. 13: "Jehovah, the King," *v.* 6, with xcvi. 10: "Let the sea roar and its fulness," *v.* 7, with the same expression in xcvi. 11; and *v.* 9, with xcvi. 13, with which it is almost identical. The subject of this psalm, as of most of the other psalms of this series, is the final demonstration to the world of the salvation wrought out for the people of God, and the universal acknowledgment by its inhabitants of His righteousness, His faithfulness, and His majesty. It became a part of the daily service of the English Church in 1552 A.D.

1. *a new song*] See on Ps. xcvi. 1.

marvellous things] See note on Ps. xcvi. 3.

hath gotten him the victory] Rather, "hath wrought deliverance, or salvation, for Him." Cf. *vv.* 2, 3, in which the word rendered "salvation" is derived from the same root as the verb which is here translated "gotten the victory."

2. *his righteousness*] Equivalent to "His salvation" in the parallel clause, as in the later chapters of Isaiah.

the heathen] Or, "the nations."

Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

4 Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.

5 Sing unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm.

6 With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the LORD, the King.

7 Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

8 Let the floods clap *their* hands: let the hills be joyful together

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3. *his mercy and his truth toward*, &c.] Rather, "His lovingkindness and His faithfulness for, or on behalf of," &c. Cf. Ps. cvi. 45, "He remembered for them His covenant," *i. e.* to fulfil it; also S. Luke i. 54, *μνησθῆναι ἐλέους...τῷ Ἀβραὰμ καὶ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ*; where it seems that the words *μνησθῆναι ἐλέους τῷ Ἀβραὰμ* should be joined together, and the intervening words considered as parenthetical.

all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God] These words occur verbatim in Isai. lii. 10. Cf. Isai. xlix. 6; also Rom. xi. 12, 25, 26; where, as in this verse, the salvation of Israel is connected with the bringing in of the fulness of the Gentiles.

4. *make a loud noise*] Or, "break forth into a loud shout." The verb thus rendered is used in this signification only in this place, and in the earlier and later prophecies of Isaiah, where it occurs six times, viz. xiv. 7, xliv. 23, xlix. 13, lii. 9, liv. 1, lv. 12; and in each place in conjunction with some form of the word rendered "rejoice." It probably denotes, as Le Clerc (in loc.) has observed, sounds made with the mouth, as distinguished from instrumental music, and is therefore correctly rendered "break forth into shouting."

sing praise] Rather, "play," *i. e.* accompany the song with the music of the stringed and wind instruments described in *vv.* 5, 6.

5. *the voice of a psalm*] This phrase occurs elsewhere only in Isai. li. 3.

6. *With trumpets*] This is the only place in the Book of Psalms in which the Hebrew word so rendered occurs. They were appointed to be used only by the priests (see note on Num. x. 8). If there be any allusion here to their original use, we must understand the summons to proclaim the praises of Jehovah with the trumpet, as an indication that this psalm points to a period when the ideal of the Jewish nation as a nation of priests shall have been realised. It appears, however, that in the later periods of Jewish history the trumpet, as well as the cornet (see note on Num. x. 2 for the distinction between them), was used on extraordinary occasions, not only by the priests, but also by the Levites, and even by the people, as *e. g.* by the Levites, at the bringing up of the ark (1 Chro. xvi. 42), and by the people generally, at the coronation of Joash (2 K. xi. 14). At the same time, the distinctive use of the trumpets by the priests seems to have been partially retained. Cf. 2 Chro. xiii. 14; Ezra iii. 10; Neh. xii. 41. This use of trumpets and cornets agrees with the conclusion which would naturally be drawn from the character of those instruments, the effect of which would be to confound rather than to aid an ordinary choir. Their use on occasion of the proclamation or coronation of kings, as of Absalom (2 S. xv. 10); of Solomon (1 K. i. 34); of Jehu (2 K. ix. 13); and of Joash (2 K. xi. 14), taken in conjunction with the words "before Jehovah the King," confirms the view that the reference is to that signal assumption of the kingdom by the Redeemer at His second Advent, which is the subject of so large a portion of ancient prophecy.

make a joyful noise] The verb thus translated is the same as that which occurs in *v.* 4, where it is translated in the same manner, and where, as in other places, it includes, if it does not primarily denote, the shout of the human voice (cf. Judg. xv. 14; 1 S. xvii. 20), which often accompanied the blast of trumpets or cornets. Cf. Ezra iii. 10—13; also 1 Thess. iv. 16, "with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." See Note at end.

7. *Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof*] Verbatim from Ps. xcvi. 11 (where see note). Cf. Ps. xxiv. 1.

the world, and they that dwell therein] Verbatim from Ps. xxiv. 1. The word rendered "world" in this and the ninth verse occurs eight times in the other books of the Psalter, seven times in this fourth book, and nine times in the earlier prophecies of Isaiah.

8. *Let the floods clap their hands*] A bold metaphor taken from Isai. lv. 12, "and all the trees of the field (or wood) shall clap their hands." The change of two letters in the word translated "floods" would convert it into the word translated "forests" in Ps. xxix. 9. There is, however, neither authority nor necessity for the change. On the contrary, the transfer of the figure from the woods to the streams is very striking—the more so when taken in connection with Ps. xciii. 3. There may also be an allusion to the closing of the waters of the Red Sea over the Egyp-

[b] Ps. 96. 13. 9 Before the LORD; [b] for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.

tians. Cf. Ps. xlvii. 1, where we read both of shouting and of clapping of hands; and especially 2 K. xi. 12, where the people are represented as clapping their hands at the coronation of Joash, in connection with the blowing of trumpets already noticed. It must be observed, however, in both these cases that the Hebrew word translated "clapped" is different from that employed in this place. The precise expression occurs only in Isai. lv. 12. The nearest approximation to it elsewhere is Hab. iii. 10, "The deep...lifted up his hands on high."

9. *for he cometh*] Rather, "for He is come." See note on Ps. xcvi. 13, which verse, with the exception of the repetition which occurs there, and of the last word, agrees verbatim with this verse.

NOTE on PSALM XCVIII. 6.

The Jews distinguish between the mode of blowing the trumpet or cornet indicated by the Hiphil form of the verb רוע and that indicated by תקע. The former they consider to be a rough, broken sound, as though the root were רעע; the latter, a smooth, equable sound. It seems more probable, however, that the sound indicated by תקע was a *single*, sharp blast (not a blast with "one trumpet," as in the A. V. of Num. x. 4); and that the sound indicated by הריע, *i.e.* תרועה, was a protracted blast, or a succession of blasts. This explanation is in entire harmony with the use of the verb תקע and the noun תרועה in Num. x. 6, תרועה יתקעו, *i.e.* "they shall blow a continuous peal," or "a succession of blasts," and of the two verbs in the following verse, תתקעו ולא תריעו, *i.e.* "ye shall blow one sharp blast, and not a continuous blast," or "a succession of blasts." See note in loc. Cf. also Ps. cl. 3, 5.

PSALM XCIX.

1 The prophet, setting forth the kingdom of God in Zion, 5 exhorteth all, by the example of forefathers, to worship God at his holy hill.

THE LORD reigneth; let the people tremble: he sitteth *between* the cherubims; let the earth [†] be moved. [†] Heb. *stagger.*

PSALM XCIX.

This is the last of that series of royal psalms (for the c[th] ps. may be regarded rather as the Doxology which closes the strain) which announce the fact, and which describe the results, of the Advent of Jehovah, and the third of those pss. which begin with the watchword "Jehovah is King." Its connection retrospectively with Isaiah's vision (Isai. vi.), and prospectively with Apoc. xi., xiv., xv. and xvi., should not be overlooked. It has been described by Delitzsch as "the earthly echo of the Seraphic Trisagion." It might perhaps be more correctly described as the actual realization of that state of blessedness which was foretold in the Seraphic song heard by the prophet, but which awaits the great day of the Advent, in order to its actual inauguration; a state in which sin and the curse shall be unknown, and the earth itself shall be full of the glory of Jehovah, as its universally acknowledged Lord and King. (Cf. S. John xii. 41.) This glory of the New Jerusalem and of the tabernacle of God amongst men is portrayed in imagery borrowed from the ritual of the Jewish temple, and from the recorded dealings of God with Moses, Aaron, and Samuel. These (cf. Apoc. v. 8—10) may be regarded as the representatives of the old Testament Church, or of the converted Jews as a nation, or of the general assembly and Church of the firstborn (see Thrupp's 'Introduction to the Psalms,' II. p. 148).

The two chief divisions of the psalm are clearly marked by the refrain of *vv.* 5 and 9. A threefold strophical division is also marked by the repetition at the close of each strophe of the same, or almost the same words; "Holy is He" (*v.* 3); "Holy is He" (*v.* 5); "Holy is Jehovah our God" (*v.* 9). Cf. Apoc. xvi. 5, where the best reading is, "Which art, and wast, and shalt be, The Holy One." The remarkable correspondence of Apoc. xi. 15—18 with this series of psalms, and with the xcixth in particular, can scarcely escape observation; and it serves as a key to the interpretation of several portions of this psalm which would otherwise be involved in much obscurity.

1. *The LORD reigneth*] See note on Ps. xciii. 1.

let the people tremble] Rather, "the peoples, or nations, tremble, or are angry;" LXX. ὀργιζέσθωσαν λαοί; cf. Apoc. xi. 18, τὰ ἔθνη ὠργίσθησαν.

he sitteth between the cherubims] Rather (as Ewald, Hupfeld, Hengstenberg, &c.), "(even) He Who sitteth upon (or, dwelleth between)

2 The LORD *is* great in Zion; and
he *is* high above all the people.
3 Let them praise thy great and
terrible name; *for* it *is* holy.
4 The king's strength also loveth
judgment; thou dost establish equity,
thou executest judgment and righte-
ousness in Jacob.
5 Exalt ye the LORD our God,
and worship at his footstool; *for* ‖ he ‖ Or, *it* is *holy.*
is holy.
6 Moses and Aaron among his
priests, and Samuel among them that
call upon his name; they called
upon the LORD, and he answered
them.

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the cherubim." Cf. 1 S. iv. 4; 2 S. vi. 2; 2 K. xix. 15; 1 Chro. xiii. 6; Isai. xxxvii. 16. These words either define, as some think, the manner in which Jehovah reigns, "He reigns, sitting upon the cherubim;" or, as seems more probable, when we take into account the general tenor of this series of psalms, and especially *vv.* 2 and 5 of this psalm, they imply that He Who, in the days of the writer, "dwelt between the cherubim," enthroned, as it were, upon those mysterious forms, and resting His feet upon the Ark beneath them (*v.* 5), is beheld in prophetic vision as "reigning in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients, gloriously." (Cf. *vv.* 2 and 5 of this ps. with Isai. xxiv. 23; and see the Excursus on these psalms, with reference to the importance of this verse and of *vv.* 4, 5, as bearing on the chronology of this series of psalms.)

let the earth be moved] Rather, "the earth is moved, or quakes." (The apocopated form, which is not found here, is generally used when the imperative or optative sense is signified; cf. 1 S. ix. 20; 2 S. xix. 37; 1 K. xvii. 21; Ps. lxxiv. 21.) There is, probably, an allusion here, as elsewhere in this series of psalms, to the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, the only terror, as has often been observed, of which the edge is sharpened, not blunted, by familiarity; cf. Isai. xxiv. 19, 20, "The earth is moved exceedingly;" "The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard." "Terra, quamdiu immota fuerit, sanari non potest; quando vero mota fuerit et intremuerit, tunc recipiet sanitatem" ('Breviarium' sub nomine Hieronymi); cf. Apoc. xi. 19, καὶ σεισμός.

2. *The* LORD *is great in Zion*] The reference seems to be to some signal exhibition of divine power and favour, in and on behalf of Zion, which shall excite the admiration of all nations; cf. Pss. lxxvi. 1, 2, xcviii. 3, 4; Isai. xxiv. 23. The Lamb is beheld by S. John (Apoc. xiv. 1) as "standing on the Mount Sion," when the "new song" (*v.* 3), to which reference is made in Pss. xcvi. and xcviii., is sung. Cf. Apoc. xi. 17, Εὐχαριστοῦμέν σοι.

3. *Let them praise*, &c.] Or, "They shall praise." The epithets "great and terrible" are applied in Deut. x. 17 to Jehovah Himself.

for it is holy] Rather, "Holy is He." This rendering seems to be determined by *vv.* 5 and 9, as well as by the fundamental passage, Isai. vi. 3, which also, as well as the probability that the words are a response of other voices, accounts for the use of the third where we might have expected that of the second person.

4. *The king's strength also*, &c.] The construction is doubtful. The words may be rendered as follows: "And the strength (or might) of a king who loveth judgment (cf. Ps. xi. 7; Isai. lxi. 8) Thou (even Thou) hast established; equity, judgment, and righteousness, Thou (even Thou) hast executed." (See Note at end.) Though the ultimate reference seems to be to the King Jehovah, Who shall hereafter fill Zion with *judgment* and *righteousness* (cf. Isai. xxxiii. 5), it is reasonable to suppose that the immediate allusion is to the reign of the Jewish king, whether Hezekiah, or, as some suppose, Josiah. The words, "executed judgment and justice," are used as characteristic of the reigns of David and Solomon. Cf. 2 S. viii. 15; 1 K. x. 9; 1 Chro. xviii. 14; 2 Chro. ix. 8; also Isai. xxxiii. 5.

5. *at his footstool*] The word translated "footstool" occurs only in five other places. In two of these (viz. Ps. cx. 1, and Isai. lxvi. 1) it is used figuratively, of the enemies of Jehovah, and of the earth; in the other places (viz. 1 Chro. xxviii. 2; Ps. cxxxii. 7, and Lam. ii. 1) it seems to be employed to denote the ark. That this is the reference here is rendered more probable from Apoc. xi. 19, καὶ ὤφθη ἡ κιβωτὸς τῆς διαθήκης τοῦ Κυρίου (or αὐτοῦ). Cf. Isai. lx. 13, "the place of My feet," where also allusion seems to be made to the ark, though ultimate reference may be made to the earth itself; also Ezek. xliii. 7, "the place of the soles of My feet." The preposition translated "at" probably means here "towards." (Cf. 1 K. viii. 30, 38, 42; also Dan. vi. 10, and ix. 3.) Allusion, however, may be made to the great Day of Atonement, when the High-priest, as the representative of the whole nation, carried the confessions and worship of the people with the blood of the sacrifices to the ark and its mercy-seat.

for he is holy] Rather, "Holy is He," as in *v.* 3. The response does not admit of the "for" of the A.V., which is not found in the Hebrew.

6. *they called*, &c.] Lit. "calling upon Jehovah, and He answers them." The sub-

7 He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar: they kept his testimonies, and the ordinance *that* he gave them.

8 Thou answeredst them, O LORD our God: thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions.

9 Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God *is* holy.

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stitution in the A.V. of the past tense for the present conveys to the mind an entirely different idea from that which may have been in the mind of the Psalmist. These verses may contain either a description of the present worship of the redeemed Church, of which Moses, Aaron, and Samuel are the chosen representatives (see the introduction); or a predictive representation of the combined worship of the risen saints, and of those who shall be Christ's at His coming, in that great day of His appearing which the psalm describes. In the latter case the saints will all have become kings and priests unto God (Rev. v. 10); and Moses, who exercised priestly functions, as in the sprinkling of the blood (Ex. xxiv. 8), in the consecration of Aaron and his sons (Lev. viii. 6—13), and in the disposition of the furniture of the sanctuary (Ex. xl. 22—27), and Samuel, who is supposed to have discharged other functions than those assigned to the Levites (1 S. ii. 18, 19, and note in loc.), as well as Aaron, the High-priest, standing amongst, or pre-eminent amongst their brethren (see note on Ps. xciv. 8), may be considered as representing the Church in its priestly character. All these were mighty in prayer and intercession; Moses (cf. Exod. xvii. 11 sq., xxxii. 31, 32); Aaron (cf. Num. xvi. 48, when he stood between the living and the dead); Samuel (cf. 1 S. vii. 8, 9, and note in loc., xii. 18, and Jer. xv. 1, where Moses and Samuel are mentioned together): but whereas, in the cases of Moses and Aaron, the priestly functions seemed peculiarly to distinguish them, so, in the case of Samuel, the character of a man mighty in prayer is that which pre-eminently belongs to him. A comparison of these verses with Apoc. xi. 16—18 strongly confirms the view here taken that the reference is to the Theophany. It should be observed, moreover, that the "Song of Moses, the servant of God," is addressed to the "King of the *nations*," according to the best readings; and that the several clauses of the song need only to be compared with the several verses of this and the preceding psalm to bring out the striking correspondence between them. Thus, *e.g.*, we may compare the words (1) "Who shall not fear Thee and glorify Thy name?" with "Let them praise Thy great and terrible name" (xcix. 3): (2) "Thou only art holy," with "Holy is He," and "The Lord our God is holy" (xcix. 3, 5, 9): (3) "Thy judgments are made manifest," with xcviii. 9, xcix. 4, &c. It should be observed, however, that the word here rendered "priests" is used also to designate secular officers, or princes. See 2 S. viii. 18 compared with 1 Chro. xviii. 17; also 2 S. xx. 26; 2 K. x. 11; and Job xii. 19.

7. *He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar*] The Old Testament imagery is still preserved, as denoting the near access of the saints to God, and their admission into the same intimate communion with Him into which Moses was admitted of old; cf. Ezek. xxx. 3, where "the day of the Lord," which is also "the time of the heathen," or Gentiles, is described as a "day of cloud." When thus interpreted, there is no difficulty in the inclusion, not only of Aaron, but also of Samuel, amongst the number of those thus highly-favoured. When understood, on the other hand, as referring to the past history of Israel, the inclusion of Samuel creates a difficulty, unless, as is not unfrequently the case, the reference is restricted to the former clause of the verse. Even then, however, it must be remembered that the speaking to Aaron recorded in Num. xii. 5—8, when the Lord "came down in the pillar of the cloud," was in the form of rebuke. Moreover, Lev. xvi. 2 seems inconsistent with the supposition that God's will was ordinarily communicated to Aaron in the pillar of cloud. The cloud under the New, as under the Old, Testament dispensation is still the outward and visible sign and symbol of the divine presence, as on the Mount of Transfiguration (S. Luke ix. 34, 35), and of Ascension (Acts i. 9). It will be so also at the Second Advent, when He Who was received up into heaven in a cloud, "shall so come in like manner" as He went into heaven. (Acts i. 11; 1 Thess. iv. 17; Rev. i. 7; xiv. 14.)

they kept his testimonies, &c.] The tense is changed, and the reference is clearly to the past, just as in Rev. vii. 14, 15, "They *washed* their robes, and *made them white* in the blood of the Lamb: therefore *are* they before the throne of God, and *serve* Him day and night in His temple."

the ordinance that he gave them] The words may be rendered, "And He gave them a decree or a statute;" cf. Exod. xv. 25, "He made for them a statute," where the same word is used which is here rendered "ordinance."

8. *thou wast a God that forgavest them*, &c.] Rather, "Thou wast a forgiving God to them, and (*i.e.* and yet) taking vengeance upon their inventions (or doings)." God punished Moses and Aaron with exclusion from the land of promise, though He par-

doned their sins. On more than one occasion His anger was kindled against Aaron (see Ex. xxxii. 7—10; and Num. xii. 9). The interpretation of Kimchi, who refers the vengeance to that which was executed against Korah, Dathan and Abiram for their doings against Moses, is inadmissible. It is quite possible, however, that the reference may be generally to the sins of the people.

9. *at his holy hill*] Or, "towards;" see on *v.* 5; cf. Apoc. xiv. 1.

NOTE on PSALM XCIX. 4.

Some translate, "And they shall praise the strength of a king who loves judgment," the verb being supplied from *v.* 3. The intervention, however, of the response which concludes that verse seems fatal to this interpretation. Another possible rendering is, "And strength (belongs to) a king who loves judgment." Others translate as the A.V., following the LXX. and Vulg.; but this rendering is open to the obvious objection that it is the king himself, and not his strength, which should be the nominative case to the verb, as in Ps. xi. 7. Moreover, the rhythmical structure of the verse appears to be broken by all of these renderings. The pronoun is emphatic in both clauses, and the pronoun with the verb following seem in both clauses to follow, not to precede, the object. The only objection to which the rendering suggested in the footnote seems justly open is the neglect of the accentuation. Cf. 2 S. vii. 13, and Ps. ix. 7, where the throne of the king, and that of Jehovah, are said to be established (the verb is the same, כּוּן), in the same manner as the king's strength is here said to be established.

PSALM C.

1 *An exhortation to praise God cheerfully, 3 for his greatness, 4 and for his power.*

A Psalm of ‖praise.

‖ Or, *thanksgiving.*

MAKE a joyful noise unto the LORD, † all ye lands.

† Heb. *all the earth.*

2 Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

PSALM C.

The inscription, "A Psalm of praise," or "thanksgiving," marg., describes the purpose of the psalm, which was not improbably written for a festive procession to the temple; see *v.* 4, and Ps. cxviii. 19. It nearly resembles the early part of Ps. xcv. (of which the use doubtless was the same), and is closely connected with the preceding series of Pss., of which it forms the fitting conclusion. The words of *v.* 5, "For the Lord is good," &c., frequently occur in the later psalms, cvi. 1, cvii. 1, cxviii. 1, cxxxvi. 1, &c.; and would seem to have been used commonly as the burden of psalms of praise about and after the Captivity. See Jer. xxxiii. 11; Ezra iii. 11; 1 Macc. iv. 24. In 1 Chro. xvi. 34 they are inserted in the psalm of thanksgiving which David put into the hand of Asaph and his brethren (so the A. V.), or rather the psalm used in subsequent times on occasions similar to that of the settlement of the ark on Zion. They also occur, 2 Chro. v. 13, in the hymn sung at the Dedication of the Temple. The Chaldee paraphrast describes the psalm as used upon the occasion of a sacrifice of thanksgiving. See Lev. vii. 12, also 2 Chro. xxix. 31; Pss. cvii. 22, cxvi. 17. Possibly the inscription may convey this import; but the contents rather suit the notion above given. In the Syriac Version the psalm is entitled "A psalm for the conversion of the heathen to the true faith."

The first verse is a summary of what follows. It calls upon the whole earth (as Pss. lxvi. 1, xcvi. 1, xcviii. 4, &c.) to rejoice and be glad before Jehovah, on account of His mercy exhibited to His chosen: and upon His chosen, to serve and worship Him in His sanctuary, and rejoice before Him, as created by Him in a peculiar sense and selected from all peoples as His own. It would be straining the import of the psalm to call it Messianic. But as we hear it read daily, and call to mind the numberless Christian hymns founded upon it, and sung daily by all denominations of Christians, we may surely consider it in a real sense prophetical. The psalm, Delitzsch says, is *Jehovistic:* it foretells the future universal reign of Jehovah: it instructs all peoples, that they have an interest in Jehovah's sovereignty, and in His choice for His own of a peculiar people.

1. *Make a joyful noise*, &c.] See Ps. xcviii. 4, where the same words occur: also Ps. lxvi. 1, where Elohim is put for Jehovah. The address is to the whole earth (see the marg.), all people, and all living things; see Gen. ix. 15, &c. It is unnatural to suppose the persons addressed in the next verse different; and that, after calling upon all living things to rejoice before God, the Psalmist abruptly passes in *v.* 2 to His peculiar people. It is however possible that, in *v.* 4, a smaller audience is addressed; the worshippers present at the ceremony of the day may be called upon to enter the courts of Jehovah with thoughts suitable to His service, and to praise Him for His doings to all and to themselves.

2. *come before his presence*] These words, if they do not necessarily presuppose the manifestation of the divine glory between the cherubim which overshadowed the mercy-

3 Know ye that the LORD he *is* God: *it is* he *that* hath made us, [1] and not we ourselves; *we are* his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

[1] Or, *and his we* are.

4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, *and* into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, *and* bless his name.

5 For the LORD *is* good; his mercy [†] *is* everlasting; and his truth *endureth* [†] to all generations.

[†] Heb. *to generation and generation.*

seat, are, at least, best explained on the supposition of its existence: a supposition which, if correct, affords a clue to the time of composition of this series of psalms, and restricts it to the period preceding the Captivity. See the Excursus upon Pss. xci.—c.

3. *Know ye*, &c.] As Theodoret explains, "Know ye, all people, by infallible proofs, which He has exhibited to us, that He is God (Elohim) alone. It is He that *made*, that is, chose us out of all peoples and made us His own (Pss. xcv. 6, cxlix. 2; Deut. xxxii. 6, 15; Isai. xxix. 23, lx. 21), not we who made or chose ourselves (to be) His people and the sheep of His pasture."

The expression "*not we* (who made) *ourselves*" seems harsh; also pointless in this connection. The marginal reading, which is also the marginal reading of the Hebrew, "He made us, and His we are," gives a more pregnant sense. See Note at end. It is further noticeable that this verse is an imitation of Ps. xcv. 7, in which there is no idea such as the received version expresses.

The 'Midrash' (see Delitzsch) interprets the verse as containing a forcible antithesis to the words attributed to Pharaoh, Ezek. xxix. 3, "My river is mine own and I made myself;" but it is doubtful if the place should not rather be rendered (as in A.V.), "My river is mine own and I made (it) for myself;" a rendering which suits the sentiment of *v.* 9 of the same chapter: also the turn of expression, in the two places supposed to be antithetic one to the other, is different.

Kay observes that Pss. xciii. and c. are full of parallelisms to Isai. xl....lxvi.; and the marginal reading is supported by the analogy of Isai. xliii. 1. If the received text be retained, the verse should perhaps be rendered, "it is He that made us; and we were not." (Sym., Rashi.)

5. *For the LORD is good*, &c.] A sentiment applicable to the peculiar people first, and next, to all people. "Jehovah is merciful: His mercy is everlasting: His truth, in performance of His promises long since made (Gen. xxii. 15, &c.), remains from generation to generation." If the Psalmist in *v.* 4 addressed a peculiar audience, in this verse he returns to the far larger audience of *v.* 1, *i. e.* to all living things, to whom the promise was first made.

This psalm contains a promise of Christianity, as winter at its close contains the promise of spring. The trees are ready to bud, the flowers are just hidden by the light soil, the clouds are heavy with rain, the sun shines in his strength; only a genial wind from the south is wanted to give a new life to all things.

NOTE on PSALM C. 3.

Many Hebrew MSS., the Chaldee, Jerome, Saadia, &c., read וְלוֹ, which gives the marginal interpretation; and the two readings וְלוֹ and וְלֹא are so commonly interchanged (see Rosenm. note: the 'Masora' reckons fifteen places in which לֹא is written and לוֹ ought to be read), that we are at liberty to choose of the two readings that which gives the better sense.

PSALM CI.

David maketh a vow and profession of godliness.

A Psalm of David.

I WILL sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O LORD, will I sing.

PSALM CI.

This psalm throughout breathes the earnest, sincere, truth-loving, lofty spirit of David. It may have been written when he commenced his reign over the twelve tribes (2 S. v. 7—9), and first occupied the city of David. The Psalmist speaks as a king, *v.* 1, &c., and markedly, *v.* 8, as the theocratic king. He proclaims his principles of living and governing; to walk uprightly with Jehovah, *vv.* 1, 2; to essay no evil thing; to banish from his presence all wicked doers, evil speakers, proud ones, slanderers, deceivers, liars, *vv.* 4, 5, 7: to search out faithful men to dwell with him and serve him, *v.* 6, and to strive with his uttermost might to expel all the wicked from the land, and from Jehovah's city, *v.* 8. The psalm is one of the very few (see Pss. cxxvii., cxxviii.) in which the duties of daily life are described, and their due performance referred to Jehovah. There appears to be frequent allusion to this psalm in the Book of Proverbs (xi. 20, xxi. 4): the tone of it and of Proverbs, in fact, is not dissimilar. See notes on Ps. xv.; in which psalm David states the conditions of acceptance with Je-

2 I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.

† Heb. *thing of Belial.*

3 I will set no †wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; *it* shall not cleave to me.

4 A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked *person.*

5 Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer.

6 Mine eyes *shall be* upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh ‖ in a perfect way, he shall serve me.

‖ Or, *perfect in the way.*

7 He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies †shall not tarry in my sight.

† Heb. *shall not be established.*

8 I will early destroy all the wicked of the land; that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the LORD.

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hovah: here, his purpose to enforce the same as king.

1. *I will sing*, &c.] "My theme," says the king, "is mercy and justice; addressed to Jehovah Whose Spirit inspires, and of Whom alone is strength to sing and to do." Hengstenberg objects that the theme is not mercy and justice, which are the attributes of God, but integrity and a good purpose, which are distinctions of man: but the objection seems an over-refinement. The attributes are God's, but they may be imitated at a distance by man (Micah vi. 8; Matt. xxiii. 23), and are the foundation of practical virtue.

unto thee, O LORD, *will I sing*] Or, "play upon the harp," or "instrument of music."

2. *I will behave myself*, &c.] Or, "I will give heed to a perfect way," &c. I will conduct myself wisely and uprightly, in the path of innocence: O when wilt Thou come to me, and aid me? The latter clause is illustrated by Exod. xx. 24. David, while he declares his purpose of living wisely in a perfect way, recollects many a sin and many a failure: so asks, or rather wishes, for Jehovah's aid, to live according to his purpose. The original words, which the A. V. renders with the interrogation, "O when wilt Thou come unto me?" are represented by many without the interrogation, in which case the sense is the same, but the expression less pointed. "When Thou shalt come unto me (see Joh. xiv. 23) and assist me, I will walk wisely in a perfect way." Tholuck renders the words thus, and imagines that they refer to David's fearful wish (2 S. vi. 9), at the commencement of his reign, to bring the ark of God into the city of David: as if he said, "When Thou shalt come unto me and dwell with me and bless me (as Thou didst bless the house of Obed-edom), I will walk in a perfect way." But the more general import of the words given above, suits the context better: the ark of God (*v.* 8) was probably on Mount Zion when the psalm was written: and it is scarcely allowable, without a distinct authority for such application, to interpret the expressions, "When Thou shalt come unto me," or, "When wilt Thou come unto me?" as referring to the coming of the ark to Zion.

3, 4. *I will set no wicked thing*, &c.] David, in dealing with such men as Doeg, Cush, &c., had large experience of slanderers, talebearers, and overweening flatterers, the pest of kings. "I will not allow any wicked thing (Heb. a thing of Belial, see Ps. xli. 8, note), worthless, useless, to stand before mine eyes (*i.e.* as a pattern for imitation, Ps. xviii. 22, or object of regard)." "I hate the work, or act, of those that turn aside from the right path; it shall not cleave to me, I shake it off as a poisonous adder," Deut. xiii. 17. "A froward, or false heart, ill-omened guest (Prov. xi. 20), shall be banished from my court and person." "I will not know (Pss. i. 6, xxxv. 11), I will not have any acquaintance or dealings with, man or thing, malicious or evil."

8. *I will early*, &c.] "Day after day, **each morning** (see 2 S. xxiv. 11; Jer. xxi. 12; Ps. lxxiii. 14; Luke xxii. 66), without let or hindrance, I will pursue my endeavour; the clearance of my palace is only the beginning of my enterprise; I will drive out at last all evildoers from the land; but specially from the city in which Jehovah dwells," 2 S. vi. 10, 16, &c.

Olshausen, J., Hitzig, and others refer this princely song, full of originality and concentration of thought, to the age of the Maccabees. Ewald, De Wette, &c., on the other hand, consider that every word of it discovers the spirit and tone of David, his lofty purpose, and intense inspiration. "It is a short, unpremeditated outpouring," the former says, "of long-restrained, profoundest sentiment, in which no attempt is made to exhaust the subject, or to clothe it in artificial shape. The thought of the great heart in which it was conceived is simple, indivisible, complete in itself, one; and corresponding to the thought is its expression; it is a whole, to which nothing can be added, and from which no part could be taken without destruction of its spirit and life!" See also Dean Stanley's

PSALM CII.

1 *The prophet in his prayer maketh a grievous complaint.* 12 *He taketh comfort in the eternity and mercy of God.* 18 *The mercies of God are to be recorded.* 23 *He sustaineth his weakness by the unchangeableness of God.*

A Prayer ‖of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the LORD.

‖ Or, *for.*

HEAR my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come unto thee.

2 Hide not thy face from me in the day *when* I am in trouble; incline thine ear unto me: in the day *when* I call answer me speedily.

3 For my days are consumed ‖like smoke, and my bones are burned as an hearth.

‖ Or, (as some read) *into smoke.*

4 My heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread.

5 By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my ‖skin.

‖ Or, *flesh.*

6 I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert.

7 I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the housetop.

8 Mine enemies reproach me all

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remarks upon the psalm; 'Jew. Ch.' Vol. II. p. 89.

PSALM CII.

The inscription of this psalm is peculiar: it is "A Prayer of the afflicted, when he faints, and pours out his meditation (Ps. civ. 34) before the Lord." It appears to be a direction for the use of the psalm by all persons afflicted, as the Psalmist was, in spirit or circumstances. The psalm itself (see *vv.* 14—18) was probably written during the Captivity: possibly when it had lasted long, and when the time prefigured in prophecy was almost expiring. The word rendered *set time* in *v.* 13 seems used (Ps. lxxv. 2; Hab. ii. 3; Dan. viii. 19) for the appointed time, *i.e.* of return.

Slight resemblances are noticed between this psalm and Jeremiah: it may have been written by Daniel, whose ninth chapter resembles it closely in tone and spirit.

Far from the land of his affections, in the midst of his foes, in desolation and misery, the prophet complains, *vv.* 1—11. But deliverance is nigh: Zion will be rebuilt, and all the earth adore Him that doeth such wonders, *vv.* 12—22. The Psalmist himself, worn out with sorrow, may not see the day (*vv.* 23—28), but Jehovah, Whose days are for ever, will see it: and the children of His servants will dwell before Him, and praise His name for ever.

The intensity of passionate sorrow in this complaint betrays the individual sufferer. But his sorrow is not only on account of his own ruined hopes: it is also on account of the ruin of his nation; raised up once by God to the highest eminence, and cast down now for sin to the lowest abyss. The latter ingredient of the bitter cup of sorrow (*i. e.* sorrow for the nation's desolation), in many parts of the psalm, overcomes the individual sentiment (*vv.* 13, 14, 16, 28).

1, 2. *Hear my prayer*, &c.] See Pss. xviii. 6, xxvii. 7, xxxix. 12, lxix. 17, &c. The commencement of the psalm, see Delitzsch, is made up of stereotyped phrases of entreaty, employed as common possessions, adequately to express thoughts springing up in a heart moved to its depths by urgent need.

2, 4, 5. *my days are consumed*, &c.] Marg. "into smoke," which seems to express the import of the ordinary reading. "Consumed into smoke," *i.e.* melt away, are mingled (so to say) with smoke, and disappear with it into nothing (Ps. xxxvii. 20; see also Ps. lxviii. 2). Many MSS., LXX., Vulg., &c. read "as smoke," or, "like smoke." The Psalmist's *bones*, the support and solid foundation of his body (Prov. xvii. 22) are burnt up as an hearth (upon which fire is ever smouldering), or as a firebrand (P. B. V.) consuming in the flame. His *heart* is sun-smitten (Ps. cxxi. 6; Hos. ix. 16) and withers; he forgets to eat bread (Job xxxiii. 20; 1 S. i. 7, xx. 34, &c.); his body, through sorrow and loud complaining, is nought but skin and bones (Job xix. 20; Lam. iv. 8).

6, 7. *I am like*, &c.] He is like a pelican alone in a wilderness; like an owl hooting alone in desolate ruins; like a sparrow that mourns without its partner upon the housetop.

The rendering "pelican" is from the LXX. The Hebrew word in the text is rendered "cormorant" in the A. V.; Isai. xxxiv. 11; Zeph. ii. 14, &c. It is a bird that lives in swamps (Lev. xi. 18, where see note). In Thomson, 'Land and Book,' p. 260, ed. 1864, a pelican is described frequenting the solitudes of Lake Huleh, in Upper Syria. The rendering "owl" is also from the LXX., who interpret "an owl in the midst of ruins," as above. Since the "pelican" and "owl" are specified, it is natural to suppose that a "sparrow," or some specific solitary bird, is mentioned in *v.* 7 by the word which the LXX. render "sparrow." Thomson, 'Land and Book,' p. 43, says, "when one of these has lost its mate he will sit upon the housetop alone, and lament by the hour his sad bereavement."

the day; *and* they that are mad against me are sworn against me.

9 For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping,

10 Because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down.

11 [a] My days *are* like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass.

12 But thou, O LORD, shalt endure for ever; and thy remembrance unto all generations.

13 Thou shalt arise, *and* have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come.

14 For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof.

15 So the heathen shall fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth thy glory.

16 When the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.

17 He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.

18 This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people

[a] Isai. 40. 6. James 1. 10.

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8. *they that*, &c.] Rather, "they that are mad against me **swear by me**," or use my name as a curse, saying, "Let him be as he is, whom Jehovah has cast down." Isai. lxv. 15; Jer. xxix. 22, xlii. 18.

9. *I have eaten*, &c.] To sit among the ashes, or to strew the head and dress with ashes, are well-known expressions of the deepest affliction; Job ii. 8. To *eat* ashes instead of bread, whilst grovelling in the dust (quia qui humi prostrati jacent quasi terram lingunt, says Calvin), would seem a still more forcible expression of hopeless sorrow; Lam. iii. 16: see also Isai. lxv. 25; Ps. lxxii. 9; Gen. iii. 14.

and mingled, &c.] A metaphor somewhat similar to the last; see Pss. xlii. 3, lxxx. 5. "Tears," in these two places, are the meat and bread of the Psalmist; in the place before us they are mingled with his drink.

10. *Because of thine*, &c.] The original words express the ideas "wrath" and "indignation" as strongly (says Delitzsch) as these can be expressed. The bitterest ingredient of our cup of sorrow is, to know that it is owing to Jehovah's wrath and fierce anger for sin.

thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down] Rather, "cast me away." The idea of lifting up, with a view to throwing down with the greater force, is strained. The metaphor is probably from a wind (Job xxvii. 21, xxx. 22), which lifts up and casts away. See Isai. xxii. 17. It describes the condition of God's people, plucked by His hand out of the home of promise, and cast far away into exile: where their days (see Ps. xc. 9), in mid course (*v.* 24), decline and vanish away as a shadow that lengthens (Jer. vi. 4) and disappears in the gloom (Ps. cix. 23): or as a plant plucked up by the roots, dried up instantly, and destroyed.

12, 13, 14. *But thou*, &c.] The import is, "But Thou, O Lord, dost endure," or rather, "dost sit upon Thy throne and reign (see Ps. ix. 7, xxix. 10; Lam. v. 19) for ever; and Thy name, or memorial, a surety of mercy and faithfulness (see Exod. iii. 15), and Thy promise (see Exod. xxv. 8), are for evermore. The time (see Jer. xxv. 11, 12, xxix. 10; Dan. ix. 2) has come that Thou shouldest shew mercy; and 'tis needed: Thy servants love, far above the palaces in the midst of which they dwell, the city wasted and ruinous in which God dwelt: and shed bitter tears of sorrow when they think of her in the dust." (See Neh. iv. 2; Lam. iv. 1.)

favour the dust thereof, &c.] The P. B. V. has "it pitieth them to see her in the dust." The literal meaning seems to be, "groan over," "view with sorrow." See Prov. xiv. 21.

15. *So the heathen*, &c.] And by His restoration of Zion, Jehovah will extend His kingdom: and all nations and kings will recognize His name, and worship Him with fear and trembling: cf. Isai. lix. 19.

16, 17, 18. *When the* LORD, &c.] The import is, "When Jehovah shall rebuild Jerusalem, and appear in His glory (Isai. xl. 3—5): when He shall regard the poor desolate ones, and despise not their prayer; His deeds of mercy shall be written, as His former deeds of mercy are, amongst us, written, not spoken only (Exod. xvii. 14; Deut. xxxi. 19), for the edification of generations to come: and a people to be born, a new people in place of that which is dead and cast away, shall be created afresh (Isai. lix. 19, lx. 2, 3), and praise Him: because He looked down from His lofty sanctuary to earth, heard the groanings of the prisoners, loosed those that were doomed to death:—to declare His name and praise in Jerusalem, when peoples are gathered together," &c. Note the persuasions addressed by this prophet to Jehovah listening to, and heeding him, as a man!—the deep need of His interference (*vv.* 13, 14), the furtherance of His kingdom (*v.* 15), and of His name

which shall be created shall praise the LORD.

19 For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the LORD behold the earth;

20 To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose [†] those that are appointed to death;

21 To declare the name of the LORD in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem;

22 When the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the LORD.

23 He [†] weakened my strength in the way; he shortened my days.

24 I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: thy years *are* throughout all generations.

25 [b] Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens *are* the work of thy hands.

26 They shall perish, but thou shalt [†] endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed:

27 But thou *art* the same, and thy years shall have no end.

28 The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.

[†] Heb. *the children of death.*

[†] Heb. *afflicted.*

[b] Hebr. 1. 10.

[†] Heb. *stand.*

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and fame (*v.* 18, 21) as a God of deliverances. The literal rendering of the Hebrew in *vv.* 16—18, &c. describes the vision as accomplished; and adds circumstances (*vv.* 21, 22), *i. e.* the proclamation of the name of Jehovah in Zion, and congregation of princes and people to serve Him, which at the time of the utterance of the word must have seemed incredible and impossible; but soon were in fact realized.

In *v.* 20 the P. B. V. renders "deliver the children appointed to death." The original words expressed in the margin "children of death," are a well-known Hebraism for that which the A. V. expresses. Cf. with *vv.* 19—21, Isai. xlii. 7, lxi. 1, lxiii. 15. Other resemblances, besides those specially noticed, between the psalm and the latter chapters of Isaiah, could be added.

23. *He weakened my strength*, &c.] *i.e.* "He weakened (marg. afflicted) my strength in my journey of life, and shortened my days: I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my brief days, before I see Thy manifestation in glory. Thy years endure through all generations; from the beginning, ere yet the heaven and the earth existed, to the end, when they shall wear out as a garment: and Thy promise to us, and to our fathers, is certain; if it be not accomplished now and to us, it will surely be accomplished to our children; and their seed will abide, and stand before Thee for ever." Cf. Ps. xc. 16. The A.V. "my strength" is from the marginal reading of the Hebrew Bible. The received reading, "He weakened or wasted His strength," admits no easy interpretation. Life is likened to a line of a definite length; see Ps. lv. 23. The Psalmist, *v.* 24, appeals to God by His own infinite existence, entreating Him not to snatch him (the Psalmist) away ere the half of his short length, or course, be run: then, resting for a moment (*vv.* 25—27) upon the sublime topic of God's eternity, draws from it an assurance that one day surely, if not in the Psalmist's day, His everlasting promise will be accomplished.

26, 27. *They* (*i.e.* heaven and earth) *shall perish. Thou art the same*] Literally, "Thou art He," as in Isai. xli. 4, xlvi. 4. See too xxxiv. 4, l. 9, li. 6, lxv. 9, 17, lxvi. 22, of which some expressions are recited. The idea is that God is the same and unchangeable. Heaven and earth, and the elements, are described as eternal (Ps. lxxii. 5, cxlviii. 6, &c.), but contrasted with God, here, as transitory and passing: in other places, as by Him liable to change or destruction; Isai. xxxiv. 4, lxv. 17, &c.

28. *shall continue*] Or, "shall dwell before Thee in a home" (see Pss. xxxvii. 29, lxviii. 16, 18). The wishes and expectations (*vv.* 16, 17, &c.) of this psalm are fulfilled in their obvious sense by the restoration of the people, and re-appearance of Jehovah in Zion. But there is a deeper foresight in the psalm; and its words in the verses quoted are fulfilled in a sense yet higher by Christ's appearance. This is the vision which floats in dim obscurity, but really and substantially, before the Psalmist. Jehovah, so we may say, stepped from behind the thin veil which scarcely concealed Him from this prophet, and appeared in the flesh. A narrative of His deeds (*v.* 18) has been written for us who come after: a people unborn and created anew by His Spirit praises Him in psalms and hymns everywhere; because He heard the groaning of the prisoners; loosed those that were appointed to death; and to Him are the peoples gathered. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (ch. i. 10, 11, 12), on account of this secret purpose of the psalm, quotes *vv.* 25—27 as simply addressed to Christ. Even His coming in the

PSALM CIII.

1 *An exhortation to bless God for his mercy,*
15 *and for the constancy thereof.*

A Psalm of David.

BLESS the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, *bless* his holy name.

2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:

3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;

4 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;

5 Who satisfieth thy mouth with good *things; so that* thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

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flesh does not exhaust the applicability of the psalm to Him. The gathering to Him of kingdoms and peoples is only, as yet, partially accomplished: and we of this day wait (says Delitzsch), as the Psalmist for His coming in the flesh, for His final appearance in glory. Hengstenberg conceives the psalm to be written by David, and to be wholly prophetical. This theory destroys its spirit. Ewald, on account chiefly of the historic descriptive words (*vv.* 14, 15), conceives it written early after the return from exile. OIshausen, J. and others relegate the inimitable psalm to the days of the Maccabees. The hypothesis adopted, that it was written towards the close of the captivity, is that of able expositors (Delitzsch, Hupfeld, Tholuck, Calvin, &c.), seems to correspond best with its purport, and gives it a meaning which any other quoted hypothesis fails to impart.

PSALM CIII.

A psalm commemorating Jehovah's manifold mercies; but chiefly His compassion in forgiving sin, and bearing with His people's weakness (*vv.* 1—18): also His infinite majesty, throned in heaven (*v.* 19), which His angels and all creation, and the Psalmist himself specially, should adore (*vv.* 20, 21).

The inscription assigns the psalm to David. The Syriac Ver. describes it as written by him in old age; after experience of sin and its chastisement, and of God's infinite lovingkindness. Certain Aramaic terminations, *vv.* 3, 4, &c., seem to indicate a later author. By whomsoever composed, it breathes a spirit of faith and hope all but evangelical, and is composed with a pathos that evidences a soul tried by real sin, sorrow, and suffering, and rescued by God's mercy. It should be compared with Psalm xxiii.

1. *all that is within me*, &c.] The Psalmist calls upon his soul to bless God: and for greater distinctness, upon its parts, upon intellect, feeling, sentiment; upon his understanding, heart, and all their powers, to unite in the work of praise.

2. *all his benefits*] *i.e.* the sum, which is infinitely great, of His benefits.

3. *Who forgiveth*, &c.] "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities," so that not one is unforgiven; and "healeth all thy diseases," so that not a trace remains of one.

Sickness of body (and so of mind) is so naturally connected with sin as its meed, that we are not surprised to find them connected in Scripture (see Ps. cvii. 20, &c.). The next verse (4) continues the idea of a deliverance, through God's miraculous interference, from sickness and death: "Who redeems thee from death and the grave, and instead of these gives life and a crown of mercy." Many commentators (Calvin, Hupfeld, &c.) object to the confinement of the words *healeth all thy diseases* to bodily ailments and their cure; and interpret them as extending to the healing of all ailments of body, mind, and spirit, by divine grace. But this extension of the meaning of the words seems to take away their point. It can scarcely be doubted that they refer to particular instances of God's healing power exhibited in the case of David himself, or of the Psalmist who sings.

5. *thy mouth*] The word here rendered "mouth" is of doubtful meaning. In Ps. xxxii. 9 the same word, with suffix different, is interpreted by the LXX. as "his jaws," and by the old Jewish commentators "his jaw," or "his mouth;" whence probably Kimchi, and our A. V., render here as above. The Chaldee Version interprets "thy day of age," a translation for which some authority may be alleged [supposing the word to come from the Hebrew root (עוד) signifying duration]: it has the advantage also that it makes the two parts of the verse in some sort to correspond: "Who satisfies thine age with good: so that thy youth is renewed like an eagle." If David wrote this psalm in old age the verse in this rendering would have a special significance. The longings of a declining age can only be satisfied by faith in God, the Giver of hope better than the natural life.

so that thy youth, &c.] Is the meaning "Thy youth is renewed, and is in strength like an eagle"? or, "Thy youth is renewed as the eagle renews its youth (so to say) by donning a new plumage"? The eagle is often an image of strength and speed (Deut. xxviii. 49; Isai. xl. 31; Hos. viii. 1), and it seems natural that youthful strength renewed by divine gift should be compared to an eagle's strength. The P.B.V. renders according to this interpretation, "making thee young and lusty as an eagle." The renewal of youth by the

6 The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.

7 He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.

[a] Exod. 34. 6, 7. Numb. 14. 18. Deut. 5. 10. Neh. 9. 17. Ps. 86. 15. Jer. 32. 18.

8 [a] The LORD *is* merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and [†] plenteous in mercy.

[†] Heb. *great of mercy.*

9 He will not always chide: neither will he keep *his anger* for ever.

10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

[†] Heb. *according to the height of the heaven.*

11 For [†] as the heaven is high above the earth, *so* great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

12 As far as the east is from the west, *so* far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

13 Like as a father pitieth *his* children, *so* the LORD pitieth them that fear him.

14 For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we *are* dust.

15 *As for* man, his days *are* as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.

16 For the wind passeth over it, and [†] it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

[†] Heb. *it* is *not.*

17 But the mercy of the LORD *is* from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;

[b] Deut. 7. 9.

18 [b] To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.

19 The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.

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moulting of plumage is not peculiar to the eagle tribe: the image does not seem to be scriptural, and is perhaps too far removed from common observation to be introduced without explanation into this solemn hymn.

6. *The* LORD, &c.] The Psalmist passes from his own experience to that of his people. Cf. Pss. cii. 20, 21, cxlvii. 6, &c.

7. *He made known*, &c.] Generally, by His revelation of Himself as described in Scripture: specially as described in Exod. xxxiii. 19 and xxxiv. 6. *His ways* are the ways in which He Himself walks (Pss. xxv. 4, lxvii. 2, lxxvii. 19). *His acts* are His deeds of righteousness, deliverance, and sustentation (Pss. ix. 12, lxxviii. 11; Exod. xxxiv. 10. See Joh. v. 17).

8. *The* LORD, &c.] Exod. xxxiv. 6, the text, so to say, of this psalm: see also Pss. lxxxvi. 5, 15, cxi. 4, cxii. 4, cxlv. 8. These places describe God's attributes displayed in His dealings with His people; but also, we may be assured, His ineffable essence in which mercy predominates.

9. *He will not*, &c.] The place, Exod. xxxiv. 6, is often quoted by Moses himself (Exod. xxxiv. 9; Num. xiv. 18) in explanation and mitigation, so to say, of the rigid sentence of Exod. xx. 5, 6; and after Moses, by the prophets in all ages; Isai. lvii. 16; Jer. iii. 5, 12; Joel ii. 13; Jonah iv. 2; 2 Chro. xxx. 9; Neh. ix. 17.

11. *For as the heaven*, &c.] The vastness of the infinite heavens above the earth is an image of God's infinite mercy, which He shews to all that fear Him: the distance which separates east and west images the distance to which He has removed our sin away, if we are His. As a father pities his son whom he loves and knows, so God pities us, knowing that we are but dust (Gen. ii. 7). God is described in Deut. xxxii. 6; Job x. 8; Isai. xxix. 16, lxiii. 16, lxiv. 8, &c., as the Father of His people: but here the relation is expressed in still more tender phrase: see Matt. vii. 7, &c. The life and death of God manifest in the flesh are the best comment upon these signal words of prophecy.

15, 16. *As for man*, &c.] Similar images Ps. xc. 5; Isai. xl. 6; Job xiv. 2, &c. The original word used for *man* expresses his weakness and littleness.

the wind passeth, &c.] The east wind (Jer. iv. 11, 12) changes in a moment a garden into a waste.

the place, &c.] See Job vii. 10 (where the very words of the second versicle of *v.* 16 occur), viii. 18, xx. 9. The place in which it grew is as if it had never been there; has no recollection of the day when it grew there and flourished. As the flower that was and is not, so is man's estate and hope. But God's mercy encompasses those that love Him as the heavens encompass the earth. His justice, that is, His faithfulness to promise, reaches to a thousand generations of those that remember His commandments to do them. See Exod. xx. 6; Deut. vii. 9; Isai. xl. 8. Perowne remarks that the *condition* of God's lovingkindness is thrice repeated (*vv.* 11, 13, 17): it is for them that fear Him.

Such is God's mercy: the incomparable majesty of Him Who thus condescends is lastly described. Cf. Ps. xciii. 1, 2, 3, &c.

20 Bless the LORD, ye his angels, † that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

† Heb. *mighty in strength.*

21 Bless ye the LORD, all *ye* his hosts; *ye* ministers of his, that do his pleasure.

22 Bless the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul.

PSALM CIV.

1 *A meditation upon the mighty power, 7 and wonderful providence of God. 31 God's glory is eternal. 33 The prophet voweth perpetually to praise God.*

BLESS the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty.

2 Who coverest *thyself* with light as *with* a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:

3 Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind:

4 [a] Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire:

[a] Hebr. 1. 7.

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20. *Bless the* LORD, &c.] See Ps. xxix. 1, cxlviii. 2. The angels (or archangels) close to God's throne, excelling in might (marg. mighty in strength, Isai. xiii. 3, xl. 26; Joel iii. 9, 11; Rev. x. 1), executing His behests, and listening to catch any intimation of His pleasure, are first addressed: next the unnumbered hosts of ministering spirits (see Luke ii. 13; Ps. civ. 4) that do His will: next, all His works (Ps. cxlviii.), in all parts of His infinite dominion: and last of all the Psalmist himself, least and least worthy of all, after a commemoration of Jehovah's perfections, mercy, long-suffering, tenderness and ineffable majesty, stirs up his own spirit to join the chorus of universal praise.

PSALM CIV.

A noble nature-psalm, which is discriminated from classic or heathen nature-songs by this, that God in it is all in all. Everything is created by Him: everything lives by and through Him. In the beginning He founded the earth and adapted it to life, out of a watery chaos (*vv.* 5—9). He furnished it with all things needful, for wild beast in desolate waste, for cattle, and for man, who is supplied with all things for need and enjoyment (*vv.* 10—15). He nourishes inanimate plants, and trees, in the topmost summits of which nestle innumerable birds (*vv.* 16—18). He created the sun and the moon for man (*v.* 19). He filled the sea with innumerable creatures; and leviathan there sports before Him (*vv.* 25—30). His care extends through *eternity*, and moves the soul of the Psalmist to glad songs of praise, and of hope for those who love Him. The creation of the world, and its description in Gen. i., throughout are present to the memory of the Psalmist as he sings: and some marked features of it are poetically touched; original chaos (*vv.* 5, 6); the creation of sun and moon (*v.* 19); of the sea and its tenants (*vv.* 25, 26, &c.).

1. *thou art clothed*, &c.] Literally, "Thou hast put on glory and majesty," *i.e.* "In creating out of nothing, or chaos, this outward form of glorious nature, *Thou hast put on* a faint, and real, but the only imaginable, palpable, image of a concealed ineffable glory." Cf. Ps. xciii. 1.

2. *Who coverest thyself*, &c.] The intense glory of the invisible God is concealed by *light*, the garment in which He is arrayed. He stretches out the canopy of Heaven, as a man stretches out the curtain of a tent (Cant. i. 5; Isai. xl. 22, xlii. 5, xliv. 24, liv. 2). He constructs His pavilion, in which to abide secretly, in the watery firmament above the clouds (Ps. cxlviii. 4; Amos ix. 6), as a man builds an upper chamber (Jer. xxii. 13) with joists and rafters. Like a king He rides forth thence upon His chariot the clouds (Isai. xix. 1; Dan. vii. 13), and sends His messengers (Ps. cxlviii. 8), winds, and a flame of fire, to execute His commands.

In the Hebrew, the words rendered *coverest thyself, stretchest out*, &c. express the original act of creation, and also the perpetual maintaining power of God. If the creative power for an instant ceased to act, all would collapse into ancient chaos.

4. *Who maketh his angels*, &c.] The literal meaning is, "Who maketh His messengers winds," &c. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (i. 7) cites the LXX. version of this passage, and draws an argument which does not seem warranted by the words in their first import, as if the angels of God were pointedly mentioned in it. Such argument, though not conveyed by the words in their literal meaning, may yet be regarded as naturally following from them, and lying, so to say, only just below the surface of them. As God Himself, in a sense (*vv.* 1, 2), clothes His ineffable glory in the outward garment of light and of the visible creation, so His angels, at His command, may put on the outward form of nature's elements, and execute His bidding, as fire and flame, storm and tempest. This explanation seems simpler than that of Calvin, for instance, who says,

† Heb. *He hath founded the earth upon her bases.*

5 † *Who* laid the foundations of the earth, *that* it should not be removed for ever.

6 Thou coveredst it with the deep as *with* a garment: the waters stood above the mountains.

7 At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away.

‡ Or, *The mountains ascend, the valleys descend.*

8 ‡ They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them.

9 Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth.

† Heb. *Who sendeth.*

10 † He sendeth the springs into the valleys, *which* † run among the hills. † Heb. *walk.*

11 They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses † quench their thirst. † Heb. *break.*

12 By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, *which* † sing among the branches. † Heb. *give a voice.*

13 He watereth the hills from his chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works.

14 He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth; b Judg. 9. 13. † Heb. *to make his face shine with oil,* or, *more than oil.*

15 And b wine *that* maketh glad the heart of man, *and* † oil to make

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"It was not the Apostle's purpose in this passage (Heb. i. 5) to expound the meaning of the Psalmist, but rather to express a truth naturally flowing from it, and in some sort implied in it. As God in His infinite wisdom employs the agency of clouds and of a fiery flame to execute His commands, and sends them hither and thither as He pleases, to do His bidding; so He uses, though secretly and covertly, the spiritual ministry of angels, those far subtler and finer essences, to minister to His world of spirits."

5, 6, 7, 8. *Who laid the foundations*, &c.] The marg. rendering is more literal. He laid the foundation of the earth, and fixed it firmly upon nothing (Job xxvi. 7). The great deep covered its solid nucleus, and rose above the tops of the primeval mountains (Ps. xc. 2; Gen. xlix. 26). A word from Him, a voice of His threatening thunder, and they fly terrified away—rise impetuously to their original rest above the tops of the mountains; then fall down deep into the lowest valleys, till they find the beds appointed for them of God (Gen. i. 9). The words of the psalm put the original wondrous process graphically before the eye. The change of tense, too, from past to present, in *vv.* 6, 7, 8. is expressive, and paints the scene in its progress. In *v.* 6 *stood* should be **stand**: in *v.* 7 *fled* should be **flee**: and *hasted away* should be **haste away**, as in the P. B. V.

According to the marginal rendering (*v.* 8) the effect of the waters (*v.* 7) passing, at the voice of God, from their original site above the mountains into the places appointed for them, is described by its consequence; by the emergence of the primeval mountains and discovery of the valleys which existed in earth's original state, when mantled by the deep. On this supposition, the words in the margin, "the mountains ascend, the valleys descend," are in a parenthesis; and the latter part of *v.* 8 is connected with *v.* 7: "At Thy rebuke they flee, at the voice of Thy thunder they hasten away (the mountains ascend, the valleys descend) to the places which Thou hast founded for them!" It is hard to decide positively between this explanation and that given above.

9. *Thou hast set a bound*, &c.] Some ask, Does the Psalmist speak in forgetfulness of the great deluge? or must we consider that in this description of earth, its tenants, and earliest origin, he includes the deluge and the promise following it (Gen. viii. 21, 22, ix. 11, 15), that from that day forth God never would again destroy all living things? It seems a sufficient reply to say that the verse describes pointedly the *present* and *future:* it describes poetically, and exultingly, the permanence of nature, and the imprisonment of ocean, despite its strength and vastness, in its appointed bed. The thought of this occurs to all who look upon the sea, and notice its wonderful movements, so irresistible apparently, yet confined to such strict limits for ever (Job xxxviii. 11).

10, 11, 12. *He sendeth the springs*, &c.] He makes springs to gush out and flow (as rivers) among the secret valleys (LXX. ἐν φάραγξιν, "wadys"), and far away among the hills. The wild ass drinks of them unseen: the birds of the air sing, in the branches of the bordering trees, a song which God hears.

13. *He watereth the hills*, &c.] His plenteous rain supplies the mountain springs, and abundantly satisfies the earth. It is the fruit of *His works*, of His chambers in the clouds (*v.* 3), out of which He pours His treasures without stint.

14. *herb for the service of man*] *i.e.* for the *use* of man (see 1 Chro. xxvi. 30).

his face to shine, and bread *which* strengtheneth man's heart.

16 The trees of the LORD are full *of sap;* the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted;

17 Where the birds make their nests: *as for* the stork, the fir trees *are* her house.

18 The high hills *are* a refuge for the wild goats; *and* the rocks for the conies.

19 He appointed the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down.

† Heb. *all the beasts thereof do trample on the forest.*

20 Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein †all the beasts of the forest do creep *forth*.

21 The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God.

22 The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens.

23 Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening.

24 O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.

25 *So is* this great and wide sea, wherein *are* things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.

26 There go the ships: *there is* that leviathan, *whom* thou hast †made to play therein.

† Heb. *formed.*

27 [c]These wait all upon thee; that

[c] Ps. 145. 15.

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15. *And wine that maketh*, &c.] The literal rendering is, "Wine too maketh glad the heart of man, to make his face shine with (or, more than) oil: and bread strengthens man's heart." The meaning is, "Wine gladdens the heart of frail man; oil makes his face to shine through joy and cheerfulness: and bread strengthens his weary heart." The Psalmist passes from the general subject of provision for man and beast (*vv.* 10—14) to particularize man's comforts and luxuries. Bread, the staff of life, occurs under both categories; in *v.* 14, *that he may bring forth food* (Heb. bread) *out of the earth:* here, *v.* 15, *bread, which strengthens man's heart.* Corn, wine, and oil, are the glory of the promised land (Deut. xi. 14, xviii. 4, &c.). The last, probably, is mentioned here with corn and wine, as a product of the earth given by God for food, and thus helpful to man's pleasure and enjoyment. Oil was commonly mixed with various articles of food ('Dict. of Bible,' Art. *Oil*); is often mentioned as itself an article of food with corn and wine (Deut. xii. 17; Jer. xxxi. 12; 1 K. xvii. 12); and is so described by travellers at the present day in Palestine (Thomson's 'Land and Book,' p. 55). The head and body were commonly anointed with oil (Deut. xxviii. 40; Luke vii. 46; 2 S. xiv. 2; Ruth iii. 3, &c.); but this practice of anointing can scarcely be alluded to here, as the face (which does not seem to have been anointed) is specified.

16. *The trees of the* LORD, &c.] Literally, **The trees of Jehovah are satisfied**, or, **have their fill** (Keble). He satisfies with His abundant rain the world of plants and trees, the cedars of Lebanon (Ps. xxix. 5) which He planted (Num. xxiv. 6).

18. *conies*] See note on Lev. xi. 5.

19. *He appointed the moon*, &c.] He appointed the moon to mark seasons (Gen. i. 14; Lev. xxiii. 4, 5, 6, &c.; Ecclus. xliii. 7): the great sun, obedient to His command, defines day and night.

24. *riches*] The idea is "property," or "possession," derived from original creation: see Gen. xiv. 19. The singular instead of the plural occurs in many MSS., in the ancient versions, and many excellent editions.

25. *So is this great and wide sea*, &c.] "That great sea, too, is full of His creations: there go the ships, carrying man to earth's extremest border: there sports leviathan, a tiny creature before Him." Ships travelling on ocean are a noticeable feature in the scene of life and movement. Leviathan may be, here, the whale, the mightiest of sea-monsters. See 'Dict. Bible,' in v.

Some translate the word rendered "ships" by "nautilus," as an instance of a small creature contrasted with leviathan. Such niceties are out of place in this comprehensive sketch of God's world. In *v.* 26, some (Ewald in 1st ed., Hitzig, Kay, &c., after the LXX. and Vulg., perhaps) render, "Leviathan whom Thou hast made to sport with;" a comparison unsuited to this picture, in which God's creatures are painted as enjoying life before Him: also it would seem undignified; and unscriptural, for the passage in Job (xli. 5), which is supposed to support this interpretation, is not parallel; rather Job xl. 20. *Therein*, *v.* 26, refers to the sea, *v.* 25, as *wherein*, *v.* 20, to "the night:" so Saadia renders.

things creeping innumerable] More correctly, "a mass of moving things without number."

both small and great beasts] Heb. "living creatures, small with great."

thou mayest give *them* their meat in due season.

28 *That* thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good.

29 Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust.

30 Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.

† Heb. *shall be.*

31 The glory of the LORD † shall endure for ever: the LORD shall rejoice in his works.

32 He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth: he toucheth the hills, and they smoke.

33 I will sing unto the LORD as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.

34 My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the LORD.

35 Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more. Bless thou the LORD, O my soul. Praise ye the LORD.

PSALM CV.

1 An exhortation to praise God, and to seek out his works. 7 The story of God's providence over Abraham, 16 over Joseph, 23 over Jacob in Egypt, 26 over Moses delivering the Israelites, 37 over the Israelites brought out of Egypt, fed in the wilderness, and planted in Canaan.

O [a]GIVE thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people.

[a] 1 Chron. 16. 8. Isai. 12. 4.

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31. *The glory of the* LORD, &c.] God views the manifold scene of His creation always, and rejoices in it always. His power, too, and ruling care, direct it always since first it came into existence. If He looks at the earth, it trembles to its foundations; if He touches it with His hand, the smoke ariseth.

Earthquakes and volcanoes are supposed here to be referred to God's direct agency; but volcanoes do not seem to be mentioned in any other scripture: the words "He toucheth or striketh the hills, and they smoke," refer rather to the lightning and its effects. See Pss. xviii. 8, cxliv. 5. In Amos ix. 5 we read, "He toucheth the earth, and it melts."

This psalm is appointed in our Church for Whit-Sunday. The creation of the material world in the beginning, its perpetual preservation, and the renewal of life through the breath of God, suggest naturally the Christian doctrine of a new creation of the spirit of man, and its perpetual maintenance by the Holy Spirit. If God withdraws His breath, all creatures (*v.* 29) return to dust: if He withdraws His quickening Spirit from the soul of a man, it dies to Him. If he imparts a new ray of divine illumination, it lives again; as the outward world, *v.* 30, is renewed day by day, and lives always through His life-giving word.

33, 34. *I will sing*, &c.] The import is, "I will sing unto Jehovah as long as I live: I will praise my God whilst I have being. Oh that my meditation may be pleasing to Him! My joy (emphatic) is from Him alone. As for sinners (the blot of this glorious scene), they shall perish at last from the earth, and God shall be all in all." It may be that the psalm is not simply a song of praise suggested by the contemplation of God in His works, but written (it could scarcely be written otherwise than) in the midst of trial and weariness of sinners—a soothing meditation upon God's manifested mercy. Such it has proved to multitudes of Christians; who see in it deeper mysteries than its author, perhaps, could discern in his early day. We are assured by St John (i. 3; see too 1 Cor. viii. 6; Heb. i. 2) that Christ took part in the work of creation. At the Transfiguration He clothed His ineffable brightness with light (*v.* 2) to symbolize His glory as God. He fed the multitudes, commanded the winds and waves, ruled the tenants of the deep, to suggest His divine power over creation; and by His Spirit, which He has poured abundantly on His followers, has cast a new light upon the whole psalm. The doctrines of the ministry of angels, of the gift of the Holy Spirit to Christians, have already been noticed, as lying only just below the surface of the psalm. The Redemption, through Christ, of sinners, and the ultimate conquest of sin and death, through His victory over both, after what has been said on the hidden purpose of the psalm, seem figured prophetically; at the least, desired ardently, and, perhaps, anticipated in the last verses of it.

PSALM CV.

A psalm nearly resembling Ps. lxxviii., and containing an epitome of God's dealings with His people, from the time of the promise to the occupation of Canaan. Its purpose is to stir up faith in Him to all time. The first fifteen verses begin the psalm recited in 1 Chro. xvi. 8—22, and placed, according to the A. V., in the hands of Asaph by David, upon the occasion of the installation of the Ark of God upon Mount Zion: see the introductions to Pss. xcvi., cvi. The psalm is connected

2 Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works.

3 Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.

4 Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore.

5 Remember his marvellous works that he hath done; his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth;

6 O ye seed of Abraham his servant, ye children of Jacob his chosen.

7 He *is* the LORD our God: his judgments *are* in all the earth.

8 He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word *which* he commanded to a thousand generations.

9 [b]Which *covenant* he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac; [b] Gen. 17. 2. & 22. 16. & 26. 3. & 28. 13. & 35. 11. Luke 1. 73. Hebr. 6. 17.

10 And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, *and* to Israel *for* an everlasting covenant:

11 [c]Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, [†] the lot of your inheritance: [c] Gen. 13. 15. & 15. 18. [†] Heb. *the cord.*

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with Pss. civ. and cvi. in various ways. They are all hallelujah psalms: Pss. civ. and cv. end with hallelujah; Ps. cvi. begins and ends with it. Other minute resemblances are noticed. Hengstenberg observes that Ps. civ. describes God's wonders in creation; Pss. cv. and cvi. in history. His hypothesis is, that all were written to console Israel during the captivity.

Verses 1—6 contain the introduction: *vv.* 7—15 the purpose of the psalm; the promise to Abraham and the patriarchs, and care of them when few and weak, and strangers in the land: *vv.* 16—23, the providences by which God carried them into Egypt; *vv.* 24—38, His dealings with them and with their enemies in Egypt: *vv.* 39—41, His miracles in the waste: *vv.* 42—45, the conclusion, in which His purpose in all these doings is again described. The miracle of the passing of the Red Sea is omitted; partly, it may be, on account of its perpetual mention, and partly because it does not belong strictly to any one of the divisions above enumerated.

1. *call upon his name*] Call upon Him with praise and prayer, Gen. iv. 26; by His name Jehovah, in which He revealed Himself, Exod. xxxiii. 19, xxxiv. 5.

make known his deeds] Pss. xcvi. 3, xcviii. 4, c. 1.

among the people] Or, *peoples:* for all are concerned. This verse occurs verbatim Isai. xii. 4.

4. *Seek the* LORD, &c.] Seek Him where His mighty strength abides: seek Him where His face is seen in glory, *i. e.* in His temple in which He dwells (Ps. lxiii. 2), and in which His face is seen of His worshippers. The ancient interpreters construe the word, in the A. V. rendered "His strength," as "His ark of strength" (see Pss. lxxviii. 61, cxxxii. 8; 2 Chro. vi. 41); in which case the sense is the same.

5. *judgments of his mouth,* &c.] The decrees which He uttered with His lips, touching His people and their foes, and issuing in events, Exod. vi. 6, vii. 4, xii. 12; Ps. cxix. 13; decrees, as of a king exercising authority, and dispensing law (*v.* 7), everywhere.

6. *O ye seed,* &c.] The reason for calling upon Jehovah; "ye are the seed of Abraham and Jacob." Instead of *Abraham* we read in the Book of Chronicles and some MSS. of the psalm *Israel.*

his chosen] *i. e.* Heirs of the promise, the theme of this song.

7. *He is the* LORD *our God,* &c.] The Psalmist commences the work of praise, to which he invited others in the introduction, *vv.* 1—6. The rendering, "He, Jehovah, is our God," is more accurate: His name has already been announced, *vv.* 1—3.

8. *He hath remembered,* &c.] He remembers, even though He seems to forget in captivity and desolation, the covenant which He made with Abraham; confirmed with an oath (Gen. xxii. 16); renewed to Isaac (Gen. xxvi. 3) and Jacob (Gen. xxviii. 13, xxxv. 12); and made for a thousand generations (Deut. vii. 9); to give to their posterity the inheritance of Canaan, *vv.* 11—42.

the word] *i. e.* the covenant by word conveyed (see *v.* 42), His holy promise, or word. In 1 Chro. xvi. 15, as also in some MSS. of the psalm, instead of "He hath remembered" is read the imperative "Remember," which interrupts the narrative of God's dealings with His people.

10. *for a law*] *i. e.* to have the permanence of perpetual law: see Gen. xvii. 7, 8.

11. *the lot*] Marg. "the cord," with which, as it were, the portion of inheritance is measured; see Mic. ii. 5; Gen. xiii. 17; Pss. xvi. 6, lxxviii. 55. The change of number, "thee," and then "your," is explained by the circumstance that the covenant was made in the first place with Abraham, afterwards with Isaac and Jacob.

12 When they were *but* a few men in number; yea, very few, and strangers in it.

13 When they went from one nation to another, from *one* kingdom to another people;

14 He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reproved kings for their sakes;

15 *Saying*, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.

16 Moreover he called for a famine upon the land: he brake the whole staff of bread.

17 He sent a man before them, [d]*even* Joseph, *who* was sold for a servant: [d] Gen. 37. 28.

18 [e]Whose feet they hurt with fetters: [†]he was laid in iron: [e] Gen. 39. 20. [†] Heb. *soul came into iron*

19 Until the time that his word came: the word of the LORD tried him.

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12. *When they were but a few*, &c.] In the original, "When they were men of number," as in Gen. xxxiv. 30, &c. This verse is connected with *vv.* 13—15, which follow, rather than with the verses preceding. It exhibits in fuller light the providence of God which guarded His people, when few in number and strangers, in the land one day to be theirs.

In 1 Chro. xvi. 19 we read, "when ye were but few," &c., a reading supported by some MSS. and by the Chald. and Syr. Versions. If it be adopted, this verse must be attached to *v.* 11, and not to *vv.* 13, 14, &c.

strangers] See Gen. xv. 7, &c.

13. *When they went*, &c.] The wandering life of the patriarchs is described. See Gen. xii. 1, 9, xiii. 18, xx. 1; Heb. xi. 9. There were many peoples in Canaan (Gen. xv. 19—21; Deut. vii. 1); but the allusion to them seems too minute for this description.

14. *reproved*, &c.] Pharaoh, Gen. xii. 17, Abimelech, xx. 3, 7, 18.

15. *Saying, Touch not*, &c.] See Gen. xxvi. 11.

mine anointed] Lit. "My Messiahs," *i.e.* My chosen, consecrated ones. The word "Messiah" is used in a general sense: consecration to office by anointing is the custom of a later age than that of the patriarchs. See 1 K. xix. 16.

my prophets] See note on Gen. xx. 7. The word (*nabi*) is used in its general sense. "My servants inspired to know My will." In Exod. vii. 1, compared with iv. 15, the same word rather indicates a man inspired of God to declare His will. The two meanings are intimately connected. Abraham was a man inspired to see the future (*v.* 11), as well as a prophet holding direct intercourse with God. Isaac and Jacob were prophets in this latter sense (Gen. xxv. and xxviii.), and also in the more common meaning of the term (Gen. xxvii. 27, and xlix.). This (*v.* 15) concludes the portion of the psalm recited in 1 Chro. xvi. Next commences the narrative of the descent into Egypt.

16. *the land*] *i. e.* of Canaan. See Gen. xii. 10, xxvi. 1, for earlier famines.

the whole staff, &c.] The original word signifies a staff upon which a man rests (Ex. iv. 2); hence the staff or support of life (Lev. xxvi. 26); see also Isai. iii. 1; Ps. civ. 15. At the end of this verse must be supplied, "So He carried them out of the land of Canaan, and brought them into Egypt."

17. *He sent*, &c.] Lit. "He sent a man before them: Joseph was sold for a servant." Some interpret "a man" (emphatic), *i.e.* "a man of men:" but the meaning is rather, "He sent one before the rest to make ready: it was Joseph, sold for a servant, according to God's decree."

18. *he was laid in iron*, &c.] Marg. "his soul came into iron;" a similar expression Isai. xlvi. 2, "themselves," lit. "their souls," are gone into captivity. Ps. lvii. 4, "My soul is among lions," &c. The P. B. V. after the Vulg. and Chald., "The iron entered into his soul," is scarcely correct in grammar; offends against the parallelism, and conveys an idea too far removed from simplicity. See the note on Gen. xxxix. 20. Joseph's imprisonment is not there described as severe; but it may have been so at first.

19. *Until the time*, &c.] "Until the time that His word (*debaro*), Jehovah's word to Joseph, came true, the promise (*imrah*) of Jehovah tried him." Jehovah's promise, implied (Gen. xxxvii. 5, 9, &c.) through the history of Joseph, to raise him to an eminent rank above his brethren, is meant in both versicles. The word prophetical came true: the promise tried him, *i. e.* put him on his trial (Gen. xxxix. 7, 8), exhibited his triumph, and was accomplished! Rosenm. and others interpret "his word" as Joseph's word, and "the word of the Lord" as the gift of prophecy given to Joseph. "Until the time when his interpretation of dreams in prison came true, and his prophetical gift (Gen. xli. 16, &c.) exhibited him as chosen of God; or shewed him to be true and innocent." The P. B. V. is, "Until the time came that his cause was known," where "his cause" seems to mean "the general story about him, his deeds of innocence, which at the last became known." It is doubtful if the Hebrew can bear this

Gen. 41. 20 [f] The king sent and loosed him; *even* the ruler of the people, and let him go free.

Gen. 41. 21 [g] He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his [†] substance:

Heb. possession. 22 To bind his princes at his pleasure; and teach his senators wisdom.

Gen. 46. 23 [h] Israel also came into Egypt; and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.

24 And he increased his people greatly; and made them stronger than their enemies.

Exod. 1. 25 [i] He turned their heart to hate his people, to deal subtilly with his servants.

Exod. 3. 26 [k] He sent Moses his servant; *and* Aaron whom he had chosen.

Exod. 7. 27 [l] They shewed [†] his signs among them, and wonders in the land of Ham.

Heb. words of his signs.

Exod. 10. 22. 28 [m] He sent darkness, and made it dark; and they rebelled not against his word.

29 [n] He turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish. [n] Exod. 7. 20.

30 [o] Their land brought forth frogs in abundance, in the chambers of their kings. [o] Exod. 8. 6.

31 [p] He spake, and there came divers sorts of flies, *and* lice in all their coasts. [p] Exod. 8. 17, 24.

32 [q] [†] He gave them hail for rain, *and* flaming fire in their land. [q] Exod. 9. 23. [†] Heb. *He gave their rain hail.*

33 He smote their vines also and their fig trees; and brake the trees of their coasts.

34 [r] He spake, and the locusts came, and caterpillers, and that without number, [r] Exod. 10. 4.

35 And did eat up all the herbs in their land, and devoured the fruit of their ground.

36 [s] He smote also all the firstborn in their land, the chief of all their strength. [s] Exod. 12. 29.

37 [t] He brought them forth also with silver and gold: and *there was* not one feeble *person* among their tribes. [t] Exod. 12. 35

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import; and the next versicle, "the word of the Lord," &c. against the parallelism, would introduce, not the above idea modified, but one, according to this rendering, wholly different.

20. *The king*, &c.] Gen. xli. 14: "Pharaoh sent and loosed him; the ruler of the people (sent) and let him go free."

22. *To bind*, &c.] Joseph, erst himself bound in fetters, had power to bind the princes of Egypt (Gen. xli. 44): and being gifted with wisdom above all Pharaoh's counsellors (Gen. xli. 38, 39), was able to instruct them in his lore.

23. *Israel*] *i. e.* Jacob, as expressed in the next line. The land of Ham, so called, probably, from Ham the father of Mizraim, the son of Noah: but there is authority for supposing that the word "Ham" or "Cham" is Egyptian, and that its import is "dark." See note, Gen. x. 6.

24. *And he increased his people*, &c.] In 215 years the family of Jacob, consisting of seventy persons, grew miraculously, for a special purpose, to the prodigious number of 600,000 men, Exod. i. 7, 9. So Deut. xxvi. 5.

25. *He turned their heart*, &c.] "It must be recollected," says Calvin, "that the origin of malice was in the Egyptians themselves, lest blame be imputed to God: by nature their hearts were full of wickedness that needed no external pressure." Similarly Augustine. *to deal subtilly*, &c.] See Exod. i. 10.

27. *his signs*] Marg. "words of His signs;" or "long list of signs;" Pss. lxv. 3 cxlv. 5. The LXX. render, "His tales of signs," τοὺς λόγους τῶν σημείων αὐτοῦ, *i. e.* "His signs, of which the tale was given of God before." See Exod. iv. 28—30.

28. *and they rebelled not*] He sent darkness, and the Egyptians, for a time at least (Exod. x. 24), yielded obedience to His word. So Kay and others explain: but most commentators, noticing that the obedience of the Egyptians was momentary and scarcely deserving of mention, refer these words to Moses and Aaron, who in this case obeyed the mandate fraught with peril, without doubt or hesitation such as sometimes appeared (Num. xx. 24, xxvii. 14). The Prayer-Book Version here is "and they were not obedient unto His word," after the LXX. But the meaning of the Hebrew text is plainly that of the A. V.

30. *Their land brought*, &c.] The second versicle, *in the chambers, of their kings*, seems to be an exclamation of horror at sight of the swarming plague.

34. *caterpillers*] *i. e.* caterpillar-locusts.

36. *the firstborn*, &c.] Exod. xi. 1, &c.; Ps. lxxviii. 51.

37. *with silver and gold*] Exod. xii 35, 36. *there was not one feeble person*, &c.] See

[u] Exod. 12. 33. 38 [u] Egypt was glad when they departed: for the fear of them fell upon them.

[x] Exod. 13. 21. 39 [x] He spread a cloud for a covering; and fire to give light in the night.

[y] Exod. 16. 12. 40 [y] *The people* asked, and he brought quails, and satisfied them with the bread of heaven.

[z] Exod. 17. 6. Numb. 20. 11. 1 Cor. 10. 4. 41 [z] He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out; they ran in the dry places *like* a river.

42 For he remembered his holy promise, *and* Abraham his servant.

43 And he brought forth his people with joy, *and* his chosen with [†] gladness:

[†] Heb. *singing.*

[a] Deut. 10, 11. Josh. 13. 44 [a] And gave them the lands of the heathen: and they inherited the labour of the people;

45 That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. Praise ye the LORD.

Isai. v. 27, lxiii. 13. Not one feeble one was prevented by his feebleness from following. Some (see Ex. xiii. 18) render "there was not one feeble one among His tribes" (cf. Ps. cxxii. 4), a rendering more expressive than the other.

39. *He spread a cloud*, &c.] A cloud went before the people to lead them by day, and a pillar of fire by night; Exod. xiii. 21, xiv. 19; Ps. lxxviii. 14. But the idea here expressed (Note at end) is rather that the cloud was spread out as a protection against the sun: cf. Ex. xl. 19, and 34—38; Num. ix. 15, x. 34: also Isai. iv. 5, where a similar idea is imaged.

40. *The people asked*, &c.] Exod. xvi. 2, 3, 16; Ps. lxxviii. 18, &c.

bread of heaven] Exod. xvi. 4; Ps. lxxviii. 24, 25. The manna is intended, bread fashioned miraculously in heaven, out of which it fell and covered the camp.

41. *He opened the rock*, &c.] At Rephidim, Ex. xvii. 1, 2, and Kadesh, Num. xx. 11. See Ps. lxxviii. 15, 16, 20.

42. *he remembered*, &c.] Exod. ii. 24.

44. *the labour of the people*] The cities, vineyards, and cultivated fields of the people, Deut. vi. 10, 11. See also Isai. xlv. 14.

45. *That they*, &c.] On this condition, that, unlike the inhabitants whose labour they enjoyed, they should for ever be a people devoted to Jehovah, and stedfast in His law. Deut. iv. 40, xxvi. 16, &c.

The connection between this psalm and the next must be noticed. Psalm cv. details God's mercies to His servants; Psalm cvi. the doings of Israel in return. The short sententious style of the poetry of these psalms ('Plain Commentary,' Vol. II. p. 233) may have been intended to assist the memory, and is remarkable. These psalms, shortly recounting God's dealing with His people, and Israel's behaviour under it, may have been committed to memory, as catechisms for the instruction of the young.

Throughout the psalm the author supposes the perpetual miraculous interference of Jehovah. Abraham visits the land by special revelation, a stranger, without a foot of ground in which to bury his dead: Joseph, by special providence, is sent before to prepare: Jacob, through a sore famine and longing desire to see his son, passes into Egypt with his family. God multiplies the people and stirs up the jealousy of Pharaoh: the taskmasters double the tasks and apply the lash: the people cry out to God, and Moses appears! The history is incomprehensible, and a mere myth, without miracle. Its substantial truth is proved by the life of the Jewish people founded upon it, and by the literature of the people which also is founded upon it. If miracle be allowed, its measure may be discussed, without fear, but with reverence suitable to the field of God's operations. The details of the miracles are of course copied from Exodus, but they are realized with a singular intensity; inexplicable except upon the supposition of their occurrence, and of the profound impression made by them upon the Jewish mind.

The ninth plague is put first (*v.* 28), and the fifth and sixth omitted; but the order is generally that of Exod. vii., viii., ix., &c. The order in Ps. lxxviii. 44, &c. is different.

NOTE on PSALM CV. 39.

The Hebrew word פרש is used in Exod. xl. 19, Num. iv. 6, for the "spreading out" of the covering of the tabernacle; and in Joel ii. 2, for the morning light "spread" on the mountain.

PSALM CVI.

1 The psalmist exhorteth to praise God. 4 He prayeth for pardon of sin, as God did with the fathers. 7 The story of the people's rebellion, and God's mercy. 47 He concludeth with prayer and praise.

Heb. Hallelu-jah.
[a] Ps. 107. 1. & 118. 1. & 136. 1.

1 [a]PRAISE ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

2 Who can utter the mighty acts of the LORD? *who* can shew forth all his praise?

3 Blessed *are* they that keep judgment, *and* he that doeth righteousness at all times.

4 Remember me, O LORD, with the favour *that thou bearest unto* thy people: O visit me with thy salvation;

5 That I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the

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PSALM CVI.

A general resemblance is noticeable between Pss. lxxviii., cv., cvi., which are in some sort supplementary one to the other. Ps. lxxviii. is didactic: Ps. cv. a song of praise: Ps. cvi. a confession of sin and prayer for pardon; with which compare Dan. ix. 4, 5; Neh. ix. 4, &c. All these psalms seem of the date of the captivity; Ps. cvi., perhaps, written towards its conclusion. The words of 1 Chro. xvi. 7 appear to say that David put into the hands of Asaph and his brethren a psalm of which *vv.* 1, 47, 48 of this psalm (with small variations) formed a part. But the words recited do not say this expressly. The import of the Hebrew is, "Then on that day did David first appoint to thank the LORD by Asaph and his brethren," or, "Then on that day did David lay a charge upon the chief (or head of all the choirs, *v.* 5) to thank the LORD by Asaph and his brethren." The LXX. render ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ τότε ἔταξεν Δαυὶδ ἐν ἀρχῇ τοῦ αἰνεῖν τὸν Κύριον ἐν χειρὶ Ἀσὰφ καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν αὐτοῦ. The meaning seems to be, that David, at the inauguration of the ark, for the first time caused a psalm to be sung in commemoration of God's mercies; and committed the office of commemoration on the first occasion to Asaph and his brethren. The psalm then composed is not, probably, given; the psalm which follows in 1 Chro. xvi. 8 ff. may have been put together afterwards, and used at the time of the composition of the Book of Chronicles; or a portion only of it may have proceeded from David, and have been added to in subsequent times.

After an introduction, *vv.* 1—3, and a general confession of sin, *v.* 6, the psalm describes in order the disobediences of the people and their punishments, in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the waste, as narrated in Exodus and Numbers, often in the very words of those records, *vv.* 7—33; next their sins of disobedience after the occupation of the land, and alternate chastisements and deliverances by the hand of God, *vv.* 34—46; and concludes with a prayer, *v.* 47, for deliverance out of present pressing captivity. A characteristic of the psalm is a perpetual allusion to, and frequent quotation of, the words of Exodus, of Isaiah, and of the later psalms. Ewald, Hupfeld, and others, mainly on account of the citations just noticed, refer the psalm to a date after the captivity; but the absence of any allusion to the great restoration, to Jerusalem, or to Zion, makes this hypothesis, for which no cogent argument is produced, somewhat unsatisfactory and improbable.

1. *Praise ye the* LORD] Heb. "Hallelujah." See cxi., cxii., cxiii., cxvii., cxxxv., cxlvi., cxlvii., cxlviii., cxlix.

O give thanks, &c.] See Pss. cv., cvii., cxxxvi. 1; also Jer. xxxiii. 11; 2 Chro. v. 13; 1 Macc. iv. 24.

3. *Blessed are they*, &c.] If any distinction is to be made between *keeping judgment* and *doing righteousness*, the first may describe inward rectitude, the second its outward exhibition in act. The transition from the plural to the singular number seems a poetical licence. This verse is a text to that which follows in the psalm; to which, after *vv.* 4, 5 of individual application and supplication, the Psalmist returns in *v.* 6.

4, 5. *Remember*, &c.] "May I share in the favour which Thou shewest (one day) to Thy people: May Thy salvation, fatherly care, and guidance be mine when it is theirs: May I see the felicity of Thy chosen (Ps. cv. 6, 43) and rejoice with them in prosperity, as now I suffer with them in adversity." A prayer for individual good to arise (if it shall please God) from favour shewn to His people: a covert expression of the wish openly declared in *v.* 47, and naturally arising from the sentiment of *v.* 3 preceding; in which the blessedness of those that serve God, and whom He regards with favour, is earnestly proclaimed. The parallel words, "favour," "salvation," are the same in Isaiah xlix. 8, and in the psalm.

gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance.

6 We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly.

7 Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of thy mercies; [b] but provoked *him* at the sea, *even* at the Red sea.

8 Nevertheless he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make his mighty power to be known.

9 He rebuked the Red sea also, and it was dried up: so he led them through the depths, as through the wilderness.

10 And he saved them from the hand of him that hated *them*, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.

11 [c] And the waters covered their enemies: there was not one of them left.

12 [d] Then believed they his words; they sang his praise.

13 [e] [†] They soon forgat his works; they waited not for his counsel:

14 [f] But [†] lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert.

15 [g] And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.

16 [h] They envied Moses also in the camp, *and* Aaron the saint of the LORD.

17 [i] The earth opened and swal-

[b] Exod. 14. 11, 12.
[c] Exod. 14 27. & 15. 5
[d] Exod. 14 31. & 15. 1
[e] Exod. 15 24. & 16. 2
[†] Heb. *They made haste, they forgat.*
[f] Numb. 11. 4. 1 Cor. 10. 6.
[†] Heb. *lusted a lust.*
[g] Numb. 11. 31.
[h] Numb. 16. 1, &c.
[i] Numb. 16. 31. Deut. 11. 6.

6, 7. *We have sinned*, &c.] The Psalmist speaks of himself and people, of the present time and of olden times from the very first, as one family, with one father, &c.; see Ps. xxii. 4. "We in our exile, and our fathers from Moses downwards, are examples of disobedience and its punishment. Our fathers forgat His miracles in Egypt, and provoked Him (or rebelled against Him) at the sea (Exod. xiv. 10, 11, 12), before it opened and made a way for them to pass." Compare 1 K. viii. 47; Jer. iii. 25, xiv. 20; Lam. iii. 42; Dan. ix. 5, which resemble the text.

multitude of thy mercies] See Isai. lxiii. 7; Lam. iii. 32; infr. *v.* 45.

but provoked him at the sea] Instead of the latter words, the LXX. render, "But provoked Him (*ἀναβαίνοντες*) ascending." It is easy to see that they must have read עֹלִים instead of עַלְיָם.

the Red sea] See note on Exod. x. 19.

9. *He rebuked*, &c.] See Ps. civ. 7; Isai. l. 2.

he led them through the depths] Or, "the sea," of hollow abysses, and rough projecting rocky eminences, as though it had been through a "level wilderness" of dry land: Exod. xiv. Compare Isai. li. 10, lxiii. 13; Nahum i. 4.

11. *there was not one*, &c.] The words, almost, of Exod. xiv. 28.

12. *Then believed*, &c.] Ex. xiv. 31, xv. 1. The song of praise is mentioned, not to illustrate the faith and gratitude, but to shew the fickleness of the people, who instantly forgat His works, &c.

13, 14. *They soon*, &c.] Ex. xv. 24, xvi. 2; Num. xi. 4. They waited not a moment to see what God proposed; but **made haste, and lusted a lust** (marg.), **and tempted** —or tried and endeavoured to constrain—Him, with importunate eager desire: see Ps. lxxviii. 18, &c.; cvii. 11.

15. *leanness*] The Hebrew word, which commonly means "consumption," "leanness" (Isai. x. 16, xvii. 4), is used to describe the character and effects of the plague or withering sickness, by which, on account of their lust, thousands were slain: Num. xi. 33, 34; Ps. lxxviii. 31. The words used in the latter place may possibly be designed to convey the idea of such a wasting emaciating plague that smote first and palpably *the fattest*, *i.e.* the strongest of them.

soul] (Num. xi. 6; Ps. lxxviii. 50) means "life," or "body," or "the part of the system nurtured by food." In the original a play upon the word *razon*, "plague," is noticeable; the change of a letter makes it *ratzon*, "desire," or "longing."

16. *They envied*, &c.] See Num. xi. 29: and for the history, Num. xvi. 3—35. *Aaron the saint*, &c.; "Aaron whom God had separated from the congregation, and sanctified as His priest."

17. *The earth opened*, &c.] And swallowed up Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; Num. xvi. 24, 26, 27, 32, xxvi. 10. Two of the principal offenders only, the sons of Reuben, are mentioned in the psalm, as sometimes in the original narrative, 25, 27; see *v.* 1.

18. *a fire*] Num. xvi. 35.

19. *They made a calf in Horeb*, &c.] In

lowed up Dathan, and covered the company of Abiram.

18 [k]And a fire was kindled in their company; the flame burned up the wicked.

19 [l]They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image.

20 Thus they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass.

21 They forgat God their saviour, which had done great things in Egypt;

22 Wondrous works in the land of Ham, *and* terrible things by the Red sea.

23 [m]Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy *them*.

24 Yea, they despised [t]the pleasant land, they believed not his word:

25 [n]But murmured in their tents, *and* hearkened not unto the voice of the LORD.

26 Therefore he lifted up his hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness:

27 [t]To overthrow their seed also among the nations, and to scatter them in the lands.

28 [o]They joined themselves also unto Baal-peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead.

29 Thus they provoked *him* to anger with their inventions: and the plague brake in upon them.

[k] Numb. 16. 35, 46.

[l] Exod. 32. 4.

[m] Exod. 32. 10.

[t] Heb. *a land of desire.*

[n] Numb. 14. 2.

[t] Heb. *To make them fall.*

[o] Numb. 25. 3.

Horeb the Mount of God, on which the divine glory rested: Exod. xxxii. 4; Deut. ix. 8—12: against the commandment, in Exod. xx. 4, 5; Deut. iv. 16, &c.

20. *changed*] LXX. ἠλλάξαντο, "bartered." Rom. i. 23.

their glory] *i.e.* "Jehovah the glory of His people, by Whose aid they had obtained a name above all peoples;" Deut. iv. 6—8, x. 21; Ps. iii. 3: or, it may be, "Jehovah their glorious God, Who had accompanied them in the cloud and fire, and Whom they had seen close to them in Sinai in His majesty;" Jer. ii. 11.

22. *land of Ham*] Ps. lxxviii. 51; cv. 23, 27.

23. *Therefore he said*, &c.] See Ezek. xx. 8: and for the history, Exod. xxxii. 10; Deut. ix. 13, 14, 19, 26. "Had not Moses His chosen stood before Him in the gap, as a valiant soldier guarding his city when a breach is made in the wall; and stayed Him by prayers and entreaties, lest He should destroy them." Similar images Ezek. xiii. 5, xxii. 30.

24. *Yea, they despised*, &c.] Num. xiii. and xiv. They relinquished all desire for the pleasant land (Jer. iii. 19; Zech. vii. 14) when they heard the report of the spies: and credited not His oft-repeated promise, that they should possess it; see Num. xiv. 31.

25. *But murmured*, &c.] Num. xiv. 2; Deut. i. 27.

26. *Therefore he lifted*, &c.] Num. xiv. 30 (margin): He lifted up His hand, and swore (Ex. vi. 8) that they should not see the land, &c. See Gen. xiv. 22; Deut. xxxii. 40; Ezek. xx. 23; Dan. xii. 7; Ps. cxliv. 8.

to overthrow] *i.e.* **destroy**; Num. xiv. 29, 32, 37.

27. *To overthrow*, &c.] The threat of exile in the second versicle is not in Numbers: it comes from Lev. xxvi. 33, of which the words are repeated, Deut. xxviii. 64; see also Ezek. v. 12; Jer. ix. 16. As the word rendered in our version to "overthrow," in *v.* 26, seems to mean there to "destroy," it should have the same meaning here: Lev. xxvi. 38 supports this interpretation. See, too, Ezek. xx. 23, where, with one word changed, this *v.* 27 of the psalm occurs.

28. *They joined*, &c.] Num. xxv. 3, 5; "They entered into a close connection and communion (1 Cor. x. 18, the same word of technical import is used in the psalm and in Numbers) with Baal-Peor, the Moabite idol (or, Lord), worshipped on the summit of Peor, and **ate sacrifices offered to dead things**, instead of to the living God;" see Jer. x. 10; Ps. cxv. 3, 4, 5. The idols of the Moabites are described contemptuously as "dead things" (Wis. xiii. 10), or as "the spirits of dead men," according to the use of the original word in Deut. xviii. 11; Isai. viii. 19: see Selden 'de Diis Syr.' i. 5. Above, *v.* 19, "*a calf*" is a contemptuous description of the image which they worshipped in Horeb.

29. *brake in upon*, &c.] The image is that of a river which has burst its barriers; see Exod. xix. 24. The plague is the slaughter inflicted upon the people by command of Moses; Num. xxv. 4, 5, 8, 9, 18.

30. *Then stood up*, &c.] Num. xxv. 7.

executed judgment, &c.] Executed the office of a judge, according to Moses' command

[e] Numb. 25. 7.

30 [e]Then stood up Phinehas, and executed judgment: and *so* the plague was stayed.

31 And that was counted unto him for righteousness unto all generations for evermore.

[f] Numb. 20. 13.

32 [f]They angered *him* also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes:

33 Because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.

[g] Deut. 7. 2.

34 They did not destroy the nations, [g]concerning whom the LORD commanded them:

[h] Judg. 1. 21.

35 [h]But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works.

36 And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them.

37 Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils,

38 And shed innocent blood, *even* the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood.

39 Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions.

40 Therefore was the wrath of the LORD kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance.

41 And he gave them into the hand of the heathen; and they that hated them ruled over them.

42 Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand.

43 [i]Many times did he deliver them; but they provoked *him* with [i] Judg. 2. 16.

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in Num. xxv. 5. It is not improbable that Phinehas, being the son of Eleazar the son of Aaron, was actually a judge to whom the command was issued. The act of Phinehas was counted a righteous act for ever memorable, and rewarded by God with a perpetual priesthood (Num. xxv. 10—13). In Gen. xv. 6 (to which there is a manifest allusion) faith is counted for righteousness: here an act, springing from faith and a divine impulse, is counted.

32. *at the waters of strife*] Num. xx. 3, 10, 13; Ex. xvii. 2, 7; Pss. lxxxi. 7, xcv. 8. Sometimes in the A. V. the Hebrew word Meribah is translated as in the text; sometimes it is left untranslated.

so that it went ill, &c.] As he himself says, Deut. i. 37, iii. 26, xxxii. 50, 51. See also Num. xx. 12, 24.

for their sakes] As they provoked him to it; infr. 33.

33. *his spirit*] *i.e.* his soul. Gen. xli. 8; Deut. ii. 30; Ps. lxxviii. 8.

so that he spake unadvisedly, &c.] Num. xx. 10: he questioned the multitude, hotly, hastily; and struck the rock, having been commanded to speak to it (*v.* 8), twice, shewing a faithless impatience; see Num. xx. 12; Deut. i. 37. Some interpret the words *they provoked his spirit*, of the people, or of Moses and Aaron (Num. xx. 24, xxvii. 14), provoking the Spirit of God: and the word which is rendered here "provoked" seems generally used of men provoking God; see Ps. lxxviii. 17, 40; Isai. lxiii. 10; and this very psalm, *vv.* 7, 43, &c. But in the above places the expression is not that men provoked "the Spirit" of God, but that they provoked "the Most High," or "provoked," without any mention of the subject: and the phrase "they (*i.e.* Moses and Aaron) provoked His Spirit," *i.e.* the Spirit of God—looking at other places in which it occurs—seems too strong a description of the impatience of Moses and Aaron.

34. *They did not destroy*, &c.] See the command, Ex. xxiii. 31, 32; xxxiv. 11—15; Deut. vii. 16, &c.

36. *which were a snare*, &c.] Exod. xxiii. 33; Judges ii. 2, 3, 11, &c.

37. *unto devils*, &c.] See Deut. xxxii. 17. The original word in both places means "lords," or "masters," such as Baal (see *v.* 28), which means "Lord," or Moloch which means "Master" or "King." In 1 Cor. viii. 5, the false gods of heathendom are styled "Lords;" in Wis. xiii. 2, "Presidents of the world."

39. *Thus were they defiled*, &c.] An historical description, *vv.* 39—43, to the time of Judges.

their own works] The idolatrous rites which they imitated are called *their own works*, as invented by man.

went a whoring, &c.] Compare the command Ex. xxxiv. 14, 15, and Lev. xx. 5, &c.; see also Judges ii. 17, viii. 33.

41. *And he gave them*, &c.] Judg. ii. 14, iii. 12, 13, x. 7, 9; Ps. lxxviii. 59—61.

42. *and they were brought*, &c.] Judges iii. 30, iv. 23. But now the expressions originally applied in these places to their enemies are applied to Israel.

43. *Many times*, &c.] Judges ii. 10. They provoked Him with their counsel (Deut. xxxii.

their counsel, and were [1]brought low for their iniquity.

44 Nevertheless he regarded their affliction, when he heard their cry:

45 [u]And he remembered for them his covenant, and repented according to the multitude of his mercies.

46 He made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives.

47 Save us, O LORD our God, and gather us from among the heathen, to give thanks unto thy holy name, *and* to triumph in thy praise.

48 Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting: and let all the people say, Amen. Praise ye the LORD.

[1] Or, *impoverished*, or, *weakened.*

[u] Lev. 26. 41, 42.

PSALM CVII.

1 *The psalmist exhorteth the redeemed, in praising God, to observe his manifold providence,* 4 *over travellers,* 10 *over captives,* 17 *over sick men,* 23 *over seamen,* 33 *and in divers varieties of life.*

O [a]GIVE thanks unto the LORD, for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. [a] Ps. 106. 1. & 118. 1. & 136. 1.

2 Let the redeemed of the LORD say *so*, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy;

28; Jer. vii. 24), which was not His counsel, and were brought low (Lev. xxvi. 39; Ezek. xxiv. 23, xxxiii. 10) through their sin. With this verse the prospect opens, and sketches the history to present time.

45. *And he remembered*, &c.] See Lev. xxvi. 41, 42.

and repented, &c.] Deut. xxxii. 36; Ps. xc. 13. The next verse explains in what way He shewed mercy.

46. *He made them also*, &c.] In the words of Solomon's prayer, 1 K. viii. 50. See also 2 Chro. xxx. 9. Other illustrations of the text are 2 K. xxv. 27; Neh. i. 11; Jer. xlii. 12; Dan. i. 9, &c.

47. *Save us*, &c.] According to promise, Deut. xxx. 3, 4; and prophecy, Isai. xi., xii.

It can scarcely be doubted that these words refer to deliverance from Babylonish captivity, which the next psalm (see Ps. cvii. 3) speaks of as accomplished. This verse, 47 (says Delitzsch), is the point of the psalm; which touches upon sin and punishment, and upon mercy, the most signal of the attributes of God. Of this He is pointedly—may it be said?—artfully, yet with profound reverence reminded, in *vv.* 45, 46, with a view to *v.* 47, the conclusion. The conclusion would, however, be abrupt without *v.* 48, which may, accordingly, be justly regarded (though some commentators think otherwise) as part of the psalm. It also is an appropriate end of the Fourth Book, or Book, generally, of Psalms of the Captivity; with which compare the last *vv.* of Pss. xli., lxxii., lxxxix., the ends, respectively, of Books I., II., III.

FIFTH BOOK. PSALMS CVII.—CL.

PSALM CVII.

There are resemblances between this psalm and the preceding Pss. civ., cv., cvi.; and perhaps the author is the same. The burden of it is deliverance, through Jehovah's mercy, from the sharp trials of exile, travel, sickness, imprisonment, and a furious tempest. Are these perils connected? Are they for the most part connected with a return from captivity? Or are they the sharp ordinary perils of life? It is not unreasonable to suppose that deliverance from Babylonish captivity (which general opinion suggests as the occasion of the psalm) called forth this song of thanksgiving for deliverance in manifold trials common to man.

The song of *the redeemed*, with the exception of *vv.* 2—8, constitutes the psalm to *v.* 32. It begins with the words of Jeremiah, xxxiii. 11, and is interrupted in *vv.* 2—8 by a description of those who sing it. "The redeemed of God (Isai. xxxv. 9, 10, li. 11, lxii. 12), whom He has redeemed from the hand of *the enemy*, or, of *calamity* (*v.* 6, *trouble*, the same word in the orig.); and gathered from all lands (Ps. cvi. 47; Isai. xi. 12), from solitary wanderings, and hunger, and thirst; and led forth safe when they cried to Him; and brought to a city of refuge:—**sing** His mercies to all those who pray to Him in similar solitary perilous (Acts viii. 26) wandering, strict imprisonment, mortal sickness, and furious tempests (*vv.* 2, 3, 4...32)." The theme of the concluding portion is the same (*i.e.* adversity and prosperity dependent upon God), but the treatment general. The expressions (*vv.* 34, 35) seem too strong for direct application to the case of the restored people. They are the observations of the Psalmist upon God's dealings with man, illustrated and suggested, haply, by the aspect of his own land, and by God's recent dealings with His people. A noticeable feature of this psalm, in which it resembles the three preceding, is a frequent allusion to, or quotation of, Isaiah and Job.

3 And gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and † from the south.

† Heb. *from the sea.*

4 They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in.

5 Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them.

6 Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, *and* he delivered them out of their distresses.

7 And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.

8 Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!

9 For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.

10 Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, *being* bound in affliction and iron;

11 Because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the most High:

12 Therefore he brought down their heart with labour; they fell down, and *there was* none to help.

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3. *from the south*] The margin reads, "from the sea." So Heb., LXX., Syr., Vulg. The word rendered "the sea" means commonly "the Mediterranean," or "the west:" see Gen. xii. 8; Exod. x. 19. In other places, where the application is less obvious, Isai. xi. 11, xlix. 12, Hengstenberg and others conceive "the sea" to mean "the Mediterranean." The "Red Sea" is so famous in Jewish story that in any narrative or poem connected with that story and the sea in question, as Ps. cxiv. 3, 5, it may well be styled "the sea;" but not in a narrative in which there is nothing to direct attention to that particular sea (Rosenm. quotes somewhat inconsiderately the last-named passage in proof that the Hebrew word "the sea" means the Red Sea), nor in a description, such as we have here, of the points of the compass viewed from the Holy City, with nothing to direct the mind to the Red Sea as one of them. The points, probably, are not accurately defined: they are the rising and the setting sun, the north, and the sea; *i.e.* the Mediterranean Sea washing Syria, Egypt, and the south.

On the return from Babylon, no doubt, exiles passed to their homes from all parts of the world. Perhaps the south is left out, because none came direct from the south through the waste. In the enumeration of the quarters of the horizon in Ps. lxxv. 6, the north is omitted, as no help could come from that quarter.

4. *They wandered*, &c.] This verse, as above noted, in continuation of *vv.* 2, 3, describes the condition of the Redeemed of God who sing His mercies to them and to sufferers like them. Deliverance from exile, and from solitary dangerous wandering, manifestly, is the occasion of the psalm. It is not easy to say what special wanderings are intended. Some traits are borrowed from the journey in the wilderness of Sinai (see Pss. lxviii. 6, lxxviii. 40). "Travel in distant, unexplored regions," says Calvin, "may be meant, enforced of necessity, or by foreign compulsion, and of which captivity in the hands of merciless robbers might easily be an accompaniment. All such miserable wanderers and captives are admonished, that chance does not direct their steps, but God's mercy redeems." Moll remarks that the description in *v.* 4 is historical: the descriptions in *vv.* 10, 17, 23, &c. are general. The first begins with a verb, the rest with participles: the burden of the psalm, *vv.* 15, 21, 31, seems to supply the verb in each case.

6. *Then they cried*, &c.] The original words, by their order and grammatical form, seem to express that the cry for help was followed immediately by help. Cf. Ps. cvi. 44 (orig.).

8. *Oh that men*, &c.] The purport is rather, "All those described (*vv.* 2—7), *i.e.* the Redeemed of God, whom He has redeemed from exile, wandering, and misery, **shall** or **ought to** sing the goodness of Jehovah."

9. *the longing soul*] The same words (orig.) in Isai. xxix. 8.

10. *Such as sit*, &c.] Imprisonment in the darkness and gloom of a hopeless bondage on account of sin, and escape through earnest prayer, are the subject of this thanksgiving. The imprisonment of Joseph (Ps. cv. 18) seems to furnish some traits. The captivity at Babylon may have suggested the general theme. But it is most in accordance with what seems the design of the psalm to suppose that ordinary sharp suffering of man in bondage, through sin, is chiefly portrayed: such as that of Jehoahaz (2 K. xxiii. 33, 34) in Egypt.

darkness and in the shadow of death] See Isai. ix. 2, xlii. 7, xlix. 9. Virg. 'Æn.' vi. 734.

affliction and iron] Job xxxvi. 8 (Heb.).

11. *Because they rebelled*, &c.] Against *the words of God* declared in His law or by His prophets, *and contemned the counsel* or purpose of God, to punish, sooner or later, sin. See Isai. v. 19, xiv. 26, &c.

13 Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, *and* he saved them out of their distresses.

14 He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder.

15 Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!

16 For he hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder.

17 Fools because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted.

[b] Job 33. 20. 18 [b]Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat; and they draw near unto the gates of death.

19 Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, *and* he saveth them out of their distresses.

20 He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered *them* from their destructions.

21 Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!

22 And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with [†] rejoicing.

[†] Heb. *singing.*

23 They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters;

24 These see the works of the LORD, and his wonders in the deep.

25 For he commandeth, and [†] raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.

[†] Heb. *maketh to stand.*

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12. *labour*] *i.e.* misery.

16. *gates of brass and...bars of iron*] Isai. xlv. 2.

17. *Fools because of*, &c.] The sick to death, whose sickness is owing to folly and sent of God, cry to Jehovah in their misery, and He rescues them from the yawning grave. By folly is meant want of wisdom, *i.e.* ignorance of God and pravity of life which issues in ruin (Job v. 3: see too Prov. i. 7, xii. 15; Ps. xiv. 1, and specially Ps. xxxviii. 5).

18. *gates of death*] See Ps. ix. 13.

20. *He sent his word*, &c.] The tenses are rather present. "He sends His word, and heals them," or "He sends His word to heal them, and rescues them from their grave-pits." The rendering "grave-pits" instead of "*destructions*" is to be preferred on account of Job xxxiii. 18, 22 and Lam. iv. 20. *His word:* the Word of God is His messenger, and runs very swiftly (Ps. cxlvii. 15); and returns not to Him that sent without executing His commands (Isai. lv. 11); descends upon Israel, and abides with His prophets (Isai. ix. 8); and tells to every man his work (Ps. cv. 19); and is often, as in this place, a Physician sent to heal the sick in body and spirit. Such passages, and others like them (Zech. ix. 1, &c.) prepare us for the doctrine that the Word of God, whereby the heavens were made (Ps. xxxiii. 6), expresses not simply a power or energy, but a personal existence: (John i. 1—5.)

In the place of Job above quoted (xxxiii. 18—22) there is a description, akin to this, of a sufferer rescued by God from the grave to which he is brought nigh. The rescue is entrusted to a "messenger," to "one of a thousand," "an interpreter," to whom God says, "Deliver him from going down to the pit." The resemblance between this psalm and the Book of Job compels an interpretation of this passage by the psalm, and *vice versâ*. The Word of God is symbolized in both places, the Angel, the Interpreter, Who heals the bodies and souls of men. So Theodoret remarks upon the verse: "The Word," he says, "Which is God, sent as man from God, and dwelling among men, healed all manner of wounds of the souls of men, and restored to health and invigorated man's reason, which sin had corrupted and debilitated." These texts, &c., are due to Delitzsch.

23. *They that go down*, &c.] They that *go down* to the low-lying sea, and traverse the *great waters* (Isai. xxiii. 3), *in ships* (see Isai. xlii. 10, Jonah i. 3). From the near coast the bed of the sea seems to lie low. The *works* of the Lord, and *His wonders in the deep*, are not simply His miracles of creation, but His "tempests" and "miracles of deliverance." Dean Stanley, 'Jewish Ch.' Vol. II. p. 186, remarks that the description in this psalm of the sea, its terrors and occupations, could not have been written before the reign of Solomon.

25. *He commandeth*] So Ps. cv. 31 and 34: *He spake:* the same word in the Heb. as here: see also Gen. i. 3, &c.

thereof] The *sea* is understood in the *deep* just mentioned. Kay and others interpret "His," *i.e.* God's waves: so He commissions "His wind," Ps. cxlvii. 18, to do His work: but see *v.* 29, note.

26 They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble.

27 They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and [†] are at their wits' end.

28 Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses.

29 He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.

30 Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.

31 Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!

32 Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders.

33 He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the watersprings into dry ground;

34 A fruitful land into [†] barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.

35 [c] He turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into watersprings.

36 And there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a city for habitation;

37 And sow the fields, and plant vineyards, which may yield fruits of increase.

38 He blesseth them also, so that they are multiplied greatly; and suffereth not their cattle to decrease.

39 Again, they are minished and brought low through oppression, affliction, and sorrow.

40 [d] He poureth contempt upon princes, and causeth them to wander in the [‖] wilderness, *where there is* no way.

41 [e] Yet setteth he the poor on high [‖] from affliction, and maketh *him* families like a flock.

42 [f] The righteous shall see *it*, and rejoice: and all iniquity shall stop her mouth.

43 Whoso *is* wise, and will observe these *things*, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD.

† Heb. *all their wisdom is swallowed.*

† Heb. *saltness.*

c Isai. 41. 18.

d Job 12. 21.

‖ Or, *void place.*

e 1 Sam. 2. 8. Psal. 113. 7, 8.

‖ Or, *after.*

f Job 5. 16. & 22. 19.

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27. *are at their wits' end*] Margin "All their wisdom is swallowed up," *i.e.* "All their skill is made nought." The description in Ovid, 'Trist.' Lib. I. El. xi. 20—30, is so similar as to illustrate and explain the text. "The waves rise up in mountains, then sink into deep valleys; the pilot skills not what to seek or shun; and his art is folly."

29. *the waves thereof*] Heb. "their waves," *i.e.* "the waves of the mariners, the waves by which they were nearly overwhelmed," according to Kay, Delitzsch, Bunsen, &c. But this seems a harsh and unscriptural expression: probably the reference is to the sea, which above (*v.* 23) is styled, first "the sea," and secondly "great waters," though it has not been mentioned, distinctly, in the plural form; see Pss. lxv. 7, lxxxix. 9; Job xxxviii. 11, &c.

30. *because they*] *i.e.* the "waves," are quiet and calm; see Jonah i. 11.

This psalm may, in a sense, be regarded as prophetical. Christ rescues from a captivity sterner than that of Babylon: points the way in a wilderness more intricate and horrid than that of Sinai: saves from sickness and death those who cry to Him with faith. He saved His followers from a furious tempest, Matt. viii. 26, to shew Himself indeed the Lord of nature, and to point for ever the deep intent of this psalm, and its full interpretation through Him.

33, 34, &c.] See Isai. xxxv. 7, xli. 18, xliv. 27, l. 2; of which the second is *v.* 35 of the psalm: *v.* 34 contains a plain allusion to Sodom (see Deut. xxix. 23), *v.* 35 to the Israelites in the desert.

38, 39, 40. He blesses a nation and multiplies it by His rich mercies. Again He visits it with chastisement, and minishes it, as once He enlarged it: pouring contempt upon its rulers, and causing them to wander in a wilderness where there is no way. Yet remembers He His mercy: rescues His needy ones from misery: multiplies them as a flock of sheep (Job xxi. 11), and restores them to their wonted state.

The very words of Job (xii. 21—23) and of Isaiah (specially xli. 18) seem to be introduced bodily into the psalm, to shew how the fortunes of men, and of the chosen people, continually illustrated their sayings. It would also seem from the concluding words (*v.* 43, with which compare Hos. xiv. 9), that the allusions in the psalm, and the facts referred to, were well known to those who sang it and heard it first. Would that we could know them as they did! But every man, from his own experience, can supply similar examples of hopeless peril and of miraculous escape.

PSALM CVIII.

1 *David encourageth himself to praise God.* 5 *He prayeth for God's assistance according to his promise.* 11 *His confidence in God's help.*

A Song *or* Psalm of David.

O GOD, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise, even with my glory.

2 Awake, psaltery and harp: I *myself* will awake early.

3 I will praise thee, O LORD, among the people: and I will sing praises unto thee among the nations.

4 For thy mercy *is* great above the heavens: and thy truth *reacheth* unto the [1] clouds.

[1] Or, *skies.*

5 Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: and thy glory above all the earth;

[a] Psal. 60. 5.

6 [a] That thy beloved may be delivered: save *with* thy right hand, and answer me.

7 God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.

8 Gilead *is* mine; Manasseh *is* mine; Ephraim also *is* the strength of mine head; Judah *is* my lawgiver;

9 Moab *is* my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe; over Philistia will I triumph.

10 Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom?

11 *Wilt* not *thou*, O God, *who* hast cast us off? and wilt not thou, O God, go forth with our hosts?

12 Give us help from trouble: for vain *is* the help of man.

13 Through God we shall do valiantly: for he *it is that* shall tread down our enemies.

PSALM CVIII.

This psalm is constructed almost word for word out of two other psalms commonly reputed Davidical. The first five verses are almost identical with the last verses of Ps. lvii., and the last eight with *vv.* 5—12 of Ps. lx. The connexion of the two psalms here united is not obvious; nor the purpose of the composite psalm. It is not likely that David himself should have united two incongruous parts of his own compositions.

The variations, generally, of phrase between this psalm and the psalms from which it is composed are unimportant. Pss. lvii. and lx. are both Elohistic: in *v.* 3 of this psalm Jehovah is substituted for Adonai. The ironical address to Philistia in *v.* 8 of Ps. lx. is changed into a simple expression of triumph. Other slight alterations, which do not improve the force of the verses altered, are noticed below.

1. *my heart is fixed*, &c.] In Ps. lvii. 7, 8, this is repeated. Instead of the words *even with my glory*, of which the meaning is obscure, we have there, *v.* 8, *Awake up, my glory*, &c.

4. *above the heavens*] Pss. lvii. 10; cxiii. 4; Ezra ix. 6: see Note below.

6. *That thy beloved*, &c.] In Ps. lx. 5, the connexion in which these words occur is different. The first versicle here depends upon the second.

8. See the note on Ps. lx. 8.

10. There is a slight variation from Ps. lx. 9: see Note below.

Herder translates this psalm ('E. P.' II. 368), regarding it as a morning hymn: see *vv.* 2—4. Kay regards it as a rejoicing over the morning, so to say, of restoration from captivity. Clauss., Rudinger, Rosenm., Hitzig, &c., suppose it put together to celebrate one of the Maccabæan victories. The conclusion, which is a supplication for aid, and lament over calamity, does not correspond to this hypothesis.

NOTES on PSALM CVIII. 4, 10.

4. Some MSS. read עד instead of מעל: LXX., ἐπάνω; the parallelism rather requires the reading עד; and the meaning is "unto the heavens."

10. The word מצור is replaced by מבצר, a more common word in this sense. See Ps. xxxi. 22; 2 Chro. viii. 5.

PSALM CIX.

1 *David, complaining of his slanderous enemies, under the person of Judas devoteth them.* 16 *He sheweth their sin.* 21 *Complaining of his own misery, he prayeth for help.* 29 *He promiseth thankfulness.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

HOLD not thy peace, O God of my praise;

2 For the mouth of the wicked and the † mouth of the deceitful † are opened against me: they have spoken against me with a lying tongue.

† Heb. *mouth of deceit.*
† Heb. *have opened* themselves.

3 They compassed me about also with words of hatred; and fought against me without a cause.

4 For my love they are my adversaries: but I *give myself unto* prayer.

PSALM CIX.

The Psalmist, contemned and despised (*v.* 25) by those to whom he had done good (*vv.* 4, 5), and by whom he had been cursed often (*vv.* 17—28), and persecuted to death (*vv.* 16, 20, 31), betakes himself, at first, to prayer as his single refuge (*v.* 4): then addresses himself to God, with Whom is vengeance, and hurls back the curse; which his foes had imprecated upon him, upon themselves, with a fire and energy, which seem to some surprising in this Divine collection of hymns. But is a Christian spirit to be expected always in the psalms? Would the words of Christ (Matt. v. 43, 44, &c.) have been uttered, if the spirit which animated the Jewish people, and exhibited itself, not unfrequently, in their annals, had been always that which He came to inculcate? Under the Old Covenant, calamity, extending from father to son, was the meed of transgression: prosperity, *vice versâ*, of obedience: (see Solomon's prayer, 2 Chro. vi. 23): and these prayers of the Psalmist (cf. Pss. x. 13, xii. 1, lviii. 10, &c.) may express the wish that God's providential government of His people should be asserted in the chastisement of the enemy of God and man. For we may assume that the enemy spoken of is not simply an enemy of David, but a liar, murderer, slanderer, such as Doeg, Ahithophel, Shimei, &c., of whose guiltiness there could be no doubt. So Calvin, "Tenendum est Davidem quoties diras istas concepit nec immodico carnis affectu fuisse commotum nec privatas causas egisse." David himself, again and again, in deed and word shewed a forgiving spirit: only here, and it may be in Pss. xxxv., lviii. 10, lxix., a spirit of vengeance, or rather, an entreaty for God's vengeance, upon His foes. A prayer for the punishment of sin abstractedly, or of sinners collectively, would not offend: it is the entreaty for sternest chastisement of an individual in this case that seems to shew a rancour alien to the tenor of the psalms. But it must also be noticed that the singular and plural are interchanged once or twice in this psalm: and it is at any rate doubtful, if, when the singular is mentioned, the Psalmist does not in fact idealize the image of his foes, and speak not specially of one, but still of many collectively, and of their sin, as abstracted from any individual. It is also well observed by Kay that even in the 35th, 69th, and this psalm, there is evidence not only of the meekness but of the persevering love of the sufferer; Pss. xxxv. 13, lxix. 4, 10, cix. 4, &c.

The inscriptions refer Pss. cviii., cix., cx., to David; and St Peter in the Acts, i. 20, quotes the cix th psalm as of David. No argument of much weight is alleged against these authorities.

Verses 1 to 5 contain a description of the malice, in word and deed, of David's foes: *vv.* 6—20, as some think, the imprecations of those foes on David, or, as is most likely, the terrible imprecation of God's vengeance upon them and theirs: *vv.* 21—25 the pitiable condition of the Psalmist provoking God's compassion; for which (*vv.* 26—30) he prays, with confident expectation of being heard; because of his deep need, and in order to the instruction of others, and the putting to shame of his foes.

1. *Hold not thy peace*] See Pss. xxviii. 1, xxxv. 22. "Be not silent and (as it were) indifferent to the haughty words and wicked deeds of my foes."

O God of my praise] *i.e.* "O God Whom I praise continually for mercies continually new," see *v.* 30; and Pss. xxii. 26, lxxi. 6; Jer. xvii. 14.

2. *For the mouth*, &c.] Or, **a wicked mouth and a deceitful mouth have they opened against me**, &c. Such are the circumstances under which the Psalmist pleads to God for succour—wicked men have spoken, and speak, lies and slander, for which there is no manner of foundation.

3, 4. *They compassed me*, &c.] "Their malice is provoked without a cause: love, forbearance, good will, cannot move them." Cf. Ps. xxxv. 12, &c.

but I give myself unto prayer] Heb. "but I prayer," *i.e.* "nought but prayer," as Ps. cxx. 7, Heb. "but I peace," *i.e.* "but I am wholly peace;" Ps. cx. 3, "Thy people shall be willing;" Heb. "willingnesses," *i. e.* "willing in a superlative degree," &c. The mixture of tenses may be significant in these early verses. The hatred of the Psalmist's foes is

5 And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love.

6 Set thou a wicked man over him: and let ‖Satan stand at his right hand.

‖ Or, *an adversary.*

7 When he shall be judged, let him †be condemned: and let his prayer become sin.

† Heb. *go out guilty,* or, *wicked.*

8 Let his days be few; *and* [a]let another take his ‖office.

[a] Acts i. 20.

‖ Or, *charge.*

9 Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow.

10 Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg: let them seek *their bread* also out of their desolate places.

11 Let the extortioner catch all that he hath; and let the strangers spoil his labour.

12 Let there be none to extend mercy unto him: neither let there be any to favour his fatherless children.

13 Let his posterity be cut off; *and* in the generation following let their name be blotted out.

14 Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the LORD; and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out.

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not of to-day or of yesterday, but of old, and of years past.

6. *Set thou a wicked man*, &c.] "Set thou a wicked man over him, to judge him (see next verse), according to his wickedness." In Lev. xxvi. 16, consumption, fever, and a burning ague, are set over the disobedient people, like savage rulers or taskmasters, to vex them. At this verse the singular is substituted for the plural, and one enemy singled out for special rebuke, as in Ps. lv. 13: see also xxxv. 11, &c., xli. 5, &c.: or, the hostile crew is idealized and treated as abstract hostility and wickedness.

Tholuck remarks that no passion is discernible in these dreadful imprecations. Rather a calm tranquil spirit, as if the chastisement were plainly deserved, and would surely come. And come assuredly it did, he adds, according to the Psalmist's confident expectations (*v.* 31), and according to God's eternal laws of government, by which chastisement follows crime. By His appointment a death without hope lights commonly upon the unrepentant and utterly depraved; their children are vagabonds and beg; their posterity are cut off, and their name forgotten. The curse was realized, though we need not say that David foresaw its realization, in the fate of Judas. He was condemned of God (Matt. xxvi. 24): his prayer, if he prayed, was despair: his life was cut off (*v.* 8) in the midst of his days: and his office (Acts i. 16, 20) another took. So that S. Peter reasonably quotes this psalm as illustrated, at the very least, and its teaching exemplified, by the history of Judas.

let Satan, &c.] Or, rather, see the margin, "Let an adversary stand at his right hand and accuse him; and let him be condemned." The phrase is taken from courts of justice; the arch-accuser, in Zech. iii. 1, stands at the right hand of the accused. The places in Job, i. 6, 9, ii. 1—7, do not seem parallel to this. Satan with the article, means there, specifically, the accuser; here generally an accuser or adversary, as in 1 S. xxix. 4, 2 S. xix. 22; 1 K. xi. 14, 23.

7. *When he shall be judged*, &c.] "When he is tried (*v.* 6), and judged in cause with another, may he go forth (see the marginal rendering) out of the hall of judgment a criminal convicted: and may his prayer to his judge for pardon and mitigation of punishment augment his guilt: or, rather, *may his prayer* to God (Isai. i. 15; Prov. xv. 8, xxviii. 9) be *sin*."

8. *Let his days*, &c.] Ps. lv. 23.

his office] LXX. τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν αὐτοῦ: whence the expression in Acts i. 20. The Syr. renders the word (see Isai. xv. 7) "savings," "treasure."

10. *Let his children be continually vagabonds*] As Cain, Gen. iv. 12: *and beg* (their bread), "cast out and banished from their (lit. ruins) ruined homes."

11. *Let the extortioner*, &c.] "Let the usurer, according to his wont, *catch*, or lay his net upon, all his property; and let strangers in blood and affection, or, rather (Deut. xxviii. 43, 44), barbarians and foreigners, *spoil* his goods, the fruit of his industry and toil." Kay remarks that the history of the Jews, from the days of Claudian downwards, is a comment upon these words.

12. *none to extend*, &c.] See Ps. xxxvi. 10; Neh. ix. 30, 31. "Let no one, his baseness ascertained, continue to him, or lengthen out, kindness begun."

13. *Let his posterity*, &c.] "Let his sons and daughters, after suffering hunger, want, and all misery (*v.* 10), be cut off; and in the next generation, that is, the generation following that of his sons and daughters who are not, let his name and their name be forgotten."

14. *Let the iniquity*, &c.] "Let the sin of his forefathers be remembered before God and visited upon him, according to the word in Exod. xx. 5; and let not his mother's sin be forgotten, but recollected and imputed."

15 Let them be before the LORD continually, that he may cut off the memory of them from the earth.

16 Because that he remembered not to shew mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even slay the broken in heart.

17 As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him.

18 As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come † into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones.

† Heb. *within him.*

19 Let it be unto him as the garment *which* covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually.

20 *Let* this *be* the reward of mine adversaries from the LORD, and of them that speak evil against my soul.

21 But do thou for me, O GOD the Lord, for thy name's sake: because thy mercy *is* good, deliver thou me.

22 For I *am* poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.

23 I am gone like the shadow when it declineth: I am tossed up and down as the locust.

24 My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of fatness.

25 I became also a reproach unto them: *when* they looked upon me they shaked their heads.

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15. *Let them be*, &c.] "Let the sins of father, mother, forefathers, be present to the memory of God, so that He may think of them always, and cut off the remembrance of the whole race before Him:" Pss. xxxiv. 16, xc. 8.

16. *Because that...but persecuted*, &c.] More literally, "but persecuted the poor and needy man, yea, the broken-hearted (Kay) man, and that to put him to death." The Heb. seems by the conjugation employed, Pilel instead of Hiphil, to imply by the last words more than death simple. Stier remarks upon this verse,—that it had (surely) its most signal fulfilment when the people arose and constrained Pilate to crucify the Man of sorrows. The people that then condemned Him were cut off in the next generation,—forty years after the crucifixion the destruction came,—their house was left desolate, their temple destroyed, and the residue became wanderers and beggars over the whole earth; Matt. xxiii. 32—36, xxvii. 25.

17. *As he loved cursing*, &c.] Possibly *vv.* 17, 18 describe as fact what *v.* 19 amplifies in a wish, or prayer. "He loved cursing, and it loved him in return, and came to him: he delighted not in blessing, and it was far from him. He clothed himself with cursing as with a garment, and it permeated his inmost parts as water, as the refreshing oil with which the body is anointed finds a way into marrow and bones." The images are familiar: the daily dress, the water that permeates daily every part of the body, the oil used daily for nourishment (Ps. civ. 15) and gladness (Ps. xxiii. 5). In the wish that follows (*v.* 19), the mantle, A. V. *garment*, which is always worn, and the girdle or belt with which the accursed one is always girded, are substituted, apparently, for more general terms.

20. *Let this be the reward*, &c.] Or, rather, **This is the reward**, or **wages of mine adversaries**, which they have earned by their crimes. The word used in *v.* 6 is used again here and in *v.* 29.

21. *But do thou*, &c.] Heb. "Do Thou with me," *i. e.* "Take part with me, and aid me, according to Thy mercy." Cf. 1 S. xiv. 6, 45, and Ps. lxxxvi. 17, Heb.: or, the meaning perhaps is, "Do Thou for me, according to Thy name and fame (Jer. xiv. 7), mercy and right." The full expression seems to occur in Ps. cxix. 65.

O GOD the Lord] "O Jehovah Adonai." Pss. lxviii. 20, cxl. 7, cxli. 8, &c. The twofold name of God, and the pronoun "Thou," Heb., shew the intensity of the appeal.

23. *I am gone*, &c.] See Ps. cii. 11. "I pass away like the shadow when it lengthens and (soon) disappears: as the locust is tossed up and down, or, rather, tossed away by the wind and carried into the sea (Exod. x. 19; Joel ii. 20), so I, weak, powerless, and at the mercy of my foes, am shaken off and tossed far away, as crumb from napkin (Hupf.), from the earth and life." See similar images, Job xxxviii. 13; Neh. v. 13. The LXX. render, "I have been shaken off, far away, as the locusts."

24. *through fasting*, &c.] Ps. xxxv. 13. *Fasting*, an indication of sorrow for sin, humiliation, and submission.

faileth of fatness] *i. e.* "faileth, or falls away through lack of fatness:" or, possibly, "from lack of oil." So Jer., LXX., Symm.

25. *I became also a reproach*, &c.] "I that merited not (*vv.* 4, 5) such reproach became," &c.

shaked their heads] Pss. xxii. 7, xliv. 14; Matt. xxvii. 39.

26 Help me, O LORD my God: O save me according to thy mercy:

27 That they may know that this *is* thy hand; *that* thou, LORD, hast done it.

28 Let them curse, but bless thou: when they arise, let them be ashamed; but let thy servant rejoice.

29 Let mine adversaries be clothed with shame, and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle.

30 I will greatly praise the LORD with my mouth; yea, I will praise him among the multitude.

31 For he shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save *him* †from those that condemn his soul. † Heb. *from the judges of his soul.*

PSALM CX.

1 *The kingdom,* 4 *the priesthood,* 5 *the conquest,* 7 *and the passion of Christ.*

A Psalm of David.

THE [a]LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. [a] Matt. 22. 44. Mark 12. 36. Luke 20. 42.

Acts 2. 34. 1 Cor. 15. 25. Heb. 1. 13.

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27. *that this is thy hand*, &c.] "This help which I ask for and which Thou wilt send." The Psalmist desires that God's chastisement may light upon his foes to justify His ways to man, and exhibit Him as an avenger of His friends.

28. *when they arise*, &c.] "When they arise in battle;" or, rather, "They have risen up in battle against me, and are ashamed, but Thy servant rejoices." The plural is now substituted for the singular. See *vv.* 2—5.

thy servant]. Ps. lxix. 17.

29, 30. *Let mine adversaries*, &c.] The prayer (*v.* 26) is now perhaps, in conclusion, changed into a confident expectation: "Mine adversaries shall," &c.

31. *at the right hand*, &c.] As a shield and defence: Pss. xvi. 8, cx. 5, cxxi. 5, cxlii. 4.

PSALM CX.

A mighty Prince, sitting at the right hand of God, and the Associate of His power, wages a fearful war against the enemies of both. He is accompanied to battle by an innumerable host of comrade warriors (*v.* 3), clad in the vestments of holiness, as befits the followers of a Priest. For He is a Priest (*v.* 4) after the order of Melchizedek; not for a brief life, as priests under the law, but for ever. The Psalmist foretells to this incomparable Captain, through the aid of Jehovah, a victory over His enemies (*v.* 5), over princes and peoples, everywhere, opposed to Him (*v.* 6); and portrays His vigour in the fight, and perseverance, till no enemy remains.

v. 1 describes the Psalmist's vision of Jehovah speaking to His Son: in *vv.* 2, 3, 4, 5 he addresses his speech directly to the Mighty One addressed in *v.* 1 by Jehovah Himself: in *vv.* 6 and 7 he dwells upon the circumstances of the day of conflict, and the demeanour, in and after it, of the Hero Messiah.

The psalm has always been interpreted of Messiah in the Jewish Church. It is interpreted of Messiah by Christ Himself in Matt. xxii. 41, &c.; Mark xii. 35. The Pharisees, against whose notions of Messiah He uses it, do not dispute the interpretation (see also Luke xx. 41 and Matt. xxvi. 64). In the Christian Church no ancient Scripture is more frequently quoted in proof that Christ is Messiah, and in illustration of His Offices (Acts ii. 34; 1 Cor. xv. 25; Eph. i. 20; Heb. i. 3, v. 6, vii. 17—23, &c.). Justin Martyr ('Apol. 1.' c. 60) applies the words of *vv.* 1—3 to the ascension of Christ, and the spread of His kingdom; and the words of *v.* 2 to the mighty victorious teaching of the Apostles In the dialogue with Trypho, p. 202, ed. Thirl., he says that the Messianic is the only tolerable explanation of it: and similarly in other places, pp. 211, 253, &c. Irenæus, Tertullian, Cyprian, Eusebius, Chrysostom, Cyril, Theodoret, &c. give similar testimony.

The explanations of those who decline the Messianic interpretation are unnatural. The Prince who sits at Jehovah's right hand (*v.* 1) (Ewald, Hupfeld, Herder, &c.) is David: but no Scripture justifies the application of the phrase, *Sit at My right hand*, in that verse to a man. The priest addressed in *v.* 4 (Hitzig, &c.) is Jonathan (1 Macc. x. 21), or Alexander Jannæus, or Simon (1 Macc. xiv. 41), and the words *for ever* mean for his whole life. But the solemn words which introduce the mention of the priesthood, uttered by God Himself, exclude the commonplace explanation. They exclude, too, the notion that the word *priest* can be applied to the Prince Messiah in any sense except the most exact. It is impossible to read the psalm without feeling that it is dealing with a theme above that of David or Jonathan; its intense dignity and solemnity become exaggeration and bombast if interpreted of any *man*.

It is allowed that it is of the age of David. Its tone, language, spirit, and contents bear out the almost universal tradition that David wrote it. Most of the Messianic psalms of David mix up Messianic circumstances with incidents of the king's own life: but Ps. ii. and his last words (2 S. xxiii. 3, 4) shew, that such

2 The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.

3 Thy people *shall be* willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness [1] from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.

4 The LORD hath sworn, and will

[1] Or, *more than the womb of the morning: thou shalt have &c.*

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a separation in vision, as in this psalm, by the king was possible. In this poem he describes without any admixture, as far as we can see, of circumstances present, the victory of Messiah over the world of evil. The image of a warrior destroying his foes may seem a strange representation of the establishment upon earth of Christ's spiritual dominion. But David described Messiah's victory over His enemies by images familiar to him as a warrior; so Ezekiel drew his images out of the forms of the Assyrian world. Still the prophecy embodies certain features which suggest, or easily fall in with, the hypothesis, that the images in it are symbolical: *e.g.* the description (*v.* 4) of Messiah as Priest; of His warrior comrades, who are priests (*v.* 3): and the hint (*v.* 7) of His weariness and wants as a man. The conflict described in the psalm (*v.* 3, &c.) is going on always: and Messiah to this day occupies His seat, as in *v.* 1.

1. *The* LORD *said*, &c.] Jehovah spake in vision (Heb. נְאֻם: Matt. xxii. 43, "David ἐν πνεύματι calleth Him," &c.) to the Lord of the Psalmist, and bade Him sit at His right hand.

my Lord] "If David, the king and prophet, calls Christ his Lord and Master, then is He not a mere man, as the Jews madly maintain, but God and Lord; and David His creature and servant:" is the comment of Theodoret upon *v.* 1.

at my right hand] In the seat of chief honour, and as the associate of power. See 1 K. ii. 19; Mark xiv. 62; Matt. xx. 21. The expression in full (as Schnurrer remarks) is "Sit on My throne at My right hand." It is derived from the custom of a king placing his son upon the throne with him, 1 K. i. 43—48.

until, &c.] This does not imply that the seat at God's right hand will be vacated when His enemies are subdued (but see 1 Cor. xv. 24—28; Acts. ii. 33, &c.).

thy footstool] An expression derived from the custom of placing the foot upon the necks of the vanquished: Josh. x. 24, 25.

2. *The* LORD, &c.] Jehovah shall send forth out of Zion an irresistible force: and, as He gives the sceptre of empire, will say to Him that wields it, "Rule Thou in the midst," &c.

the rod of thy strength] *i.e.* the staff or sceptre of power, as in Jer. xlviii. 17; Ezek. xix. 12 (Heb.). The centre of the unparalleled dominion is Zion (see Ps. ii. 6; Isai. ii. 3. Zion used here, as often, for Jerusalem): its limits are undefined (compare Pss. ii., lxxii.; Zech. ix. 10). The Prince is invited in the words *Rule Thou*, &c. to assume dominion, whilst His enemies are as yet (apparently) unsubdued. "He gives us," says Luther, "no other mark as to the spot in which Christ is to reign, but this: *In the midst of Thine enemies.*"

3. *Thy people shall be willing*, &c.] The meaning is, "Thy people shall be willing (Heb. "willingnesses," or "free offerings," plural of excellence) in the day of Thy prowess: in robes of holiness." A description of the preparation for the conflict. There is no hesitation: it is no mercenary army (Judges v. 2, 9): it follows the King from love: it is clad in the robes of holiness, as the singers in 2 Chron. xx. 21 (see the Note there, and Apoc. xix. 14): as befits the ministers of a holy service (Ps. xxix. 2): as becomes the soldiers of a Priest-king. After the word *holiness* a full stop, or colon.

from the womb, &c.] Lit. "From the womb of the morning (falls) to Thee the dew of Thy youth."—As the dew of early morning, in *multitude*, and *sudden*, *unexpected*, *marvellous* appearance, (comes) an unnumbered troop of "*Thy youthful followers.*" The dew is imaged as born out of the womb of morning. In 2 S. xvii. 11, 12, the fall of the dew furnishes an image of the *silence* and *suddenness* with which an army lights upon the enemy: in Mic. v. 7, it is the image of a *miraculous presence* towards which man contributes nothing: in Job xxxviii. 8, see too *vv.* 28, &c., the sea in the beginning issues *out of the womb*. The image in the text seems to combine these various figures. Others interpret differently: "As the dew of early morning, abundant, refreshing, spreading far and wide, miraculous, is the might *of Thy perpetual youth.*"

4. *The* LORD *hath sworn*, &c.] The preface to this verse, "Jehovah hath sworn," &c. and the choice of an example of the union of king and priest from so hoar an antiquity, and of such marked and peculiar significance, seem to shew that the union is absolutely singular. David (2 S. vi. 13) is said to have sacrificed an ox and fatlings: and Solomon (1 K. viii. 5) with the congregation to have sacrificed sheep and oxen. David, too, wore the priestly ephod (2 S. vi. 14), and blessed the people (2 S. vi. 18); yet the cases of Saul, Uzziah, &c. (1 S. xiii. 12, 13; 2 Chro. xxvi. 18—20: see also Num. xvi. 40) seem to shew conclusively, that they could not officiate as priests, and that the words, *Thou art a priest for ever*, could not

[b] Heb. 5. 6. & 7. 17. not repent, [b]Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

5 The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.

6 He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill *the places* with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over [l] many countries.

[l] Or, *great.*

7 He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head.

PSALM CXI.

1 *The psalmist by his example inciteth others to praise God for his glorious,* 5 *and gracious works.* 10 *The fear of God breedeth true wisdom.*

[†] PRAISE ye the LORD. I will praise the LORD with *my* whole

[†] Heb. *Halle-lujah.*

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apply, even in the first instance, to David. Melchizedek (Gen. xiv. 18, &c.), King of Salem, and Priest of the Most High God, gave significant gifts to Abraham, spake words of deep mysterious import, and blessed him! Messiah is a Priest after the likeness (Heb. vii. 15, 16), after the image, that is, of an inspired King, a High Priest, of the heathen, as well as of the Jews: *for ever*, not, as the priests under the law, for a brief period. That Melchizedek was priest in a full sense of the word seems evident from his exercising an office (as it would seem) above that of Abraham (see Heb. vii. 4, 6, 7; Zech. vi. 9—15).

5. *the Lord*] Adonai, *i.e.* Jehovah. Some MSS. of Kenn. and De Rossi read יהוה. It seems natural to consider *v.* 5 a continuation of the Psalmist's address to Messiah, rather than a somewhat abrupt address to Jehovah Himself, inserted between the address to Messiah (*v.* 4) and the meditation upon His deeds (*v.* 6). The latter verse and *v.* 7 cannot possibly apply to any but Messiah. In *v.* 1, Messiah is seated at Jehovah's right hand as the Associate of His power: in this verse, by a different figure (Pss. xvi. 8, cix. 31, cxxi. 5), Jehovah is portrayed as coming down from heaven and assisting Messiah in the conflict, at His right hand. With this *v.* 5 the address to Messiah ends: the two next *vv.* (6 and 7) are the meditations of the Psalmist upon the august scene before his eyes. The transition in *vv.* 5, 6, from the address to Messiah by the Psalmist to a meditation upon and admiration of His deeds is eminently poetical and graphic. The transitions in Ps. ii. are similar.

6. *He shall fill the places*, &c.] Lit. "He is full of bodies," &c. or "'Tis full of bodies," &c. *i.e.* "He shall exercise a complete authority among His foes; He shall cover the field of battle (*v.* 3) with the slain; He shall smite the head of His enemies (Ps. lxviii. 21) over all lands." It is possible that the Hebrew words mention the name of one land, or rather of one city, "Rabbah," of the Ammonites, whose head should be smitten (Kay quotes Josh. xi. 5—10; Hab. iii. 13, 14); but the general sense is not much altered by this rendering. The triumphs of Messiah are symbolized by figures taken from ordinary wars; it may be from a particular contemporary war.

7. *He shall drink of the brook in the way*] Not waiting for repose or princely refreshment: and He shall lift up His head, recruited (see Judg. xv. 18), and follow till no enemy remain. The conflict, as of one day, is described: Messiah defeats and destroys His foes, and stays not for weariness or delicacy till all is achieved.

There is in the original some admixture of tenses (*vv.* 2, 4, 5, 6, 7), about which, perhaps, too many words are wasted. The events seem future: sometimes so expressed, sometimes described as accomplished; according to a common prophetical figure.

Luther remarks on this psalm that it is worthy to be set in a frame of gold and diamonds; so full it is, he says, of excellent Christian thought and Divine instruction; and of all the psalms the very crown and chief. The fifth verse in particular, he says, is like a rich copious spring, or inexhaustible mine, from which flow Christian instruction and wisdom, faith, hope, and confidence, the like to which no other Scripture supplies.

PSALM CXI.

A psalm commemorating God's mercies in brief sententious couplets, *vv.* 1, 2, 3—8, or triplets, *vv.* 9, 10, for the most part of three words. The nurture of the people in the desert, the gift of Canaan, the deliverance out of Egypt, seem to be hinted at, *vv.* 4, 5, 6; and His power, justice, truth, which are the delight and everlasting profit of His servants, are earnestly portrayed.

The psalm consists of ten verses and twenty-two versicles; marked in succession by the letters of the alphabet. It is one of the ten psalms which begin with Hallelujah. The others are cvi., cxii., cxiii., cxxxv., cxlvi.—cl. Six of these psalms, cxiii., cxiv., cxvi., cxvii., cxxxv., cxlvi., according to the Talmud, had a special name, and were used at the great festivals. Pss. cxiii., cxiv., were sung in families on the night of the Passover, before the emptying of the second cup: Pss. cxv.—cxviii. after the celebration and the fourth cup. Many commentators suppose that Pss. cxi., cxii. were used as a preface to the above-named solemn hymns.

The two psalms, cxi. and cxii., resemble one another in construction, alphabetical arrangement, and general tone and manner.

heart, in the assembly of the upright, and *in* the congregation.

2 The works of the LORD *are* great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.

3 His work *is* honourable and glorious: and his righteousness endureth for ever.

4 He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: the LORD *is* gracious and full of compassion.

† Heb. *prey.*

5 He hath given †meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his covenant.

6 He hath shewed his people the power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the heathen.

7 The works of his hands *are* verity and judgment; all his commandments *are* sure.

† Heb. ar *stablishe*

8 They †stand fast for ever and ever, *and are* done in truth and uprightness.

9 He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend *is* his name.

a Job 28. 28. Prov. 1. 7 & 9. 10. Ecclus. 1 16.

10 a The fear of the LORD *is* the

They are connected in this way: Ps. cxi. sets forth the greatness, mercy, and righteousness of God: Ps. cxii. the reflection of these attributes in the greatness, *v.* 2, mercy, *v.* 5, and righteousness, *vv.* 4, 9, of His chosen. The correspondence of purpose in the two psalms is important to the right appreciation of some difficulties connected with the latter psalm. The contents are of so general a nature that they give no clue to the author, nor to their date.

1. *in the assembly*, &c.] *The upright*, generally, are the people of Israel; see Num. xxiii. 10, where the word rendered *righteous* is the word here used. *The assembly* represents a smaller collection of upright ones than *the congregation;* and the meaning is, I will praise Thee secretly and openly; see Ps. cvii. 32. The Prayer-Book Version expresses this sense, "secretly among the faithful, and in the congregation."

2. *The works of the* LORD, &c.] The commencement of the Song: the works of Jehovah for His people are great, and far above any other works.

sought out, &c.] "Searched into," and "studied," and thus "fully understood" to be inimitably great, by all those that delight in them (see Ps. cxix. 45, 94, 155; so Hupfeld and others). Or, probably, "exquisitely excellent," and "fully satisfying" all those that delight in them; *i.e.* excellent, precious, incomparable, in the judgment of those who best understand them—His faithful worshippers: see Ps. cxii. 1.

3. *His work*] Or, "His working." *His righteousness*," *i.e.* "His holiness, uprightness, justice;" each infinite in degree.

4. *He hath made*, &c.] Rather, "He hath got Him a remembrance for His wonderful deeds," *i.e.* "He has done such wonderful deeds, that a remembrance of them abides for ever:" see Ps. lxxviii. 3, 4; Num. xvi. 40; Josh. iv. 6, 7. The connexion between the first and second versicle is given by the Prayer-Book paraphrase: "The merciful and gracious Lord hath so done His marvellous works that they ought to be had in remembrance." See Exod. xxxiv. 6; also 2 Chro. xxx. 9.

5. *He hath given*, &c.] The allusion is, in the first instance, to His feeding of His people in the Waste; in the next place, to His support, always, in similar exigencies, of His faithful ones (Ps. xxxiv. 9, 10): "He gave, and gives, meat (marg. prey, *i.e.* taken by wild beasts) to His faithful ones: He remembers always, as in the Waste He remembered, His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for a thousand generations." Gen. xv.

6. *He hath shewed*, &c.] "He shewed in deed His power, which He exerted in behalf of His people, by giving them the heritage of the heathen."

7. *The works*, &c.] "All that He does, always, is justice absolute, and flows from an absolute truthfulness. All His commandments are fixed, firm, effectual, everlasting: and based on His eternal truth and equity." Pss. xix. 9, xciii. 5.

8. *They stand fast*, &c.] Are the Works or the Commandments intended? The Commandments were mentioned last, and the words are naturally referable to them; and being, as above described, sure, effectual, and, in a sense, themselves *works*, they may easily be coupled with His works.

9. *He sent redemption*, &c.] "He redeemed His people out of Egyptian bondage, and still redeems: He commanded (*i.e.* made authoritatively, Ps. cxxxiii. 3) a covenant on Sinai with them, and keeps it for evermore."

his name] *i.e.* Himself, as displayed by His deeds and words (Pss. viii. 1, xcix. 3), is holy, and deeply to be feared.

10. *The fear of*, &c.] See the places noted in the margin.

beginning of wisdom: ‖ a good understanding have all they † that do *his commandments:* his praise endureth for ever.

‖ Or, *good success.*
† Heb. *that do them.*

PSALM CXII.

1 *Godliness hath the promises of this life,* 4 *and of the life to come.* 10 *The prosperity of the godly shall be an eyesore to the wicked.*

† PRAISE ye the LORD. Blessed *is* the man *that* feareth the LORD, *that* delighteth greatly in his commandments.

† Heb. *Hallelujah.*

2 His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.

3 Wealth and riches *shall be* in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever.

4 Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: *he is* gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.

5 A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with † discretion.

† Heb. *judgment.*

6 Surely he shall not be moved for

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the beginning] *i.e.* the principal part. In Prov. iv. 7 the word here employed is rendered *principal thing* in the A. V. See Pss. lxxviii. 51; cv. 36, *the chief* (Heb. beginning) *of all their strength.*

a good understanding, &c.] See Prov. xiii. 15. Crowning conclusion. The fear of Jehovah is the choicest wisdom: a true prudence, to guide their life, have they who obey Him!

his praise] *i.e.* Jehovah's praise, Whose Name has been the theme of the psalm, endures for ever.

PSALM CXII.

The excellence of piety and its reward (see cxi. 10) to distant generations and to a man's self and family is sung in an alphabetical hymn resembling the last. The seed of the righteous is mighty in the earth, *v.* 2; wealth and prosperity follow his steps, *v.* 3; light in darkness, *v.* 4; a fearless heart in trouble, *v.* 7; discretion and judgment in all his affairs, *v.* 5: he is gracious, compassionate, righteous, merciful, liberal, considerate, *vv.* 4, 5, 9. At his prosperity the wicked are confounded; they gnash with their teeth and perish, *v.* 10.

The inscription in the Vulg. (reversionis, Aggæi et Zachariæ) refers the psalm to the period of the return from exile. Compare Pss. i. and xv.

2. *His seed*, &c.] A blessing of the Old Covenant! The seed of the righteous attains to opulence, and to heroic fame, which commonly seem the meed of violence and ambition. The same phrase is used of Nimrod, Gen. x. 8; a similar one, Ruth ii. 1, of Boaz; and, 1 S. ix. 1, of Kish.

3. *Wealth and riches*, &c.] See Prov. iii. 16, viii. 18, &c.

his righteousness, &c.] Righteousness, some say, is put for its fruit, that is, prosperity or opulence, as indicated in the verse preceding. Similarly in Ezek. xviii. 20; Hos. x. 13. But, probably, the verse is an echo (twice repeated, see *v.* 9) of Ps. cxi. 3. The righteousness of God remains the same for ever: in a sense man's righteousness, as a reflexion of the Divine, his uprightness, justice, holiness, which are from God, remain for ever! "A good man," says Geier, "devotes himself to God, not for a day only but for life: nay, when brief life is over, his devotion to his purpose and its reward do not end!"

4. *Unto the upright*, &c.] Calamity is imaged by darkness, and escape from it by light. See Isai. ix. 1, 2, lviii. 10; Micah vii. 8. When a righteous man is whelmed, apparently, in hopeless calamity, a light, of which no one dreamed, suddenly arises. See Ps. xcvii. 11. The words which follow, *he is gracious, full of compassion, and righteous*, are applied by some to Jehovah, of Whom two of them are the undoubted descriptive epithets, Pss. lxxviii. 38, cxi. 4; by others, to the upright man, of whom the verse is speaking, and whose graciousness and compassion are further insisted upon in the verse following. But if these godlike characteristics are applied to a man, they must be so applied with a tacit reference to Him from Whose image they are drawn. See Luke vi. 36; Matt. v. 45, 48. The epithet "righteous" is not often applied to God: but, in this psalm, *v.* 6, and commonly, to a man: see Ps. i. 5, 6.

5. *A good man*, &c.] The word rendered "good" means, rather, "happy" or "happiness," here, as in Isai. iii. 10; Jer. xliv. 17. The phrase is altered to preserve the alphabetical arrangement, but the import is similar to that of *v.* 1, **Happy is the man**, or, **"It is well with the man** that sheweth favour or kindness, and lendeth," &c. Prov. xiv. 21.

he will guide his affairs, &c.] The meaning may be, "he will conduct," or, "he conducts his affairs (successfully) in judgment;" that is, "he will conduct his affairs successfully against his enemies, and come out of the court of judgment unspotted and uninjured." See Ps. cxxvii. 5. The next verse (6) continues the same idea.

6. *Surely*, &c.] "As the earth is fixed for

ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.

7 He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD.

8 His heart *is* established, he shall not be afraid, until he see *his desire* upon his enemies.

[a] 2 Cor. 9. 9 [a]He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour.

10 The wicked shall see *it*, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish.

PSALM CXIII.

1 *An exhortation to praise God for his excellency,* 6 *for his mercy.*

[†] PRAISE ye the LORD. Praise, O ye servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD. [† Heb. *Hallelujah.*]

2 [a]Blessed be the name of the LORD from this time forth and for evermore. [a] Dan. 2. 20.

3 [b]From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the LORD's name *is* to be praised. [b] Mal. 1. 11.

4 The LORD *is* high above all nations, *and* his glory above the heavens.

5 Who *is* like unto the LORD our God, who [†]dwelleth on high, [† Heb. *exalteth himself to dwell.*]

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ever (Ps. civ. 5) on its eternal bases—so this man shall never be moved. His prosperity in life, and his blessing, which abides for ever, shall be an everlasting memorial of God's favour:" Prov. x. 7; see also Pss. xxi. 7, xxx. 6, &c.

7. *He shall not*, &c.] "He shall not be alarmed by tidings of evil to himself or his friends (1 S. iv. 19; 2 K. xix. 6), for his heart is full of trust in God, and fixed and firm." Isai. xxvi. 3.

8. *until he see*, &c.] See Ps. liv. 7, "Till he look upon," *i.e.* with triumph.

9. *He hath dispersed*, &c.] Prov. xi. 24. An abundant scattering of good is intimated.
his righteousness, &c.] See *v.* 3.
his horn] See Pss. lxxv. 4, 5, lxxxix. 17.

10. *The wicked*, &c.] "The wicked see the prosperity, which they desire to pass away, increase more and more: and they with their wicked desires (Prov. x. 24) gnash their teeth (Pss. xxxv. 16, xxxvii. 12), melt away (Ps. lxviii. 2), and perish."

PSALM CXIII.

A psalm of praise, in three parts: *vv.* 1—3 contain the exhortation to praise; *vv.* 4—6 a picture of Jehovah's glory; *vv.* 7—9 a picture of His condescension to man, and miracles of providential mercy.

The psalm is appointed for the service of our church on Easter Day; probably on account of the use of it mentioned above; see Ps. cxi. The date is uncertain; the conclusion (*v.* 9) would suggest, as its occasion, the conversion, through God's interposition, of some barren, *homeless* woman (Exod. i. 21; 2 S. vii. 11, 27) into a mother of sons.

1. *Praise ye*, &c.] See Pss. cxxxv. 1. xxix. 1.
O ye servants, &c.] Pss., lxix. 36, xxxiv. 22, cxxxvi. 22, &c. All faithful Israelites are intended: if the Levites only had been meant, some word of explanation (Pss. cxxxiv. 1, cxxxv. 2) would have been added. It is not without a reason that praise is given to Jehovah's *name*—a name associated with Deeds and Words, such as no other people could boast. See Pss. cii. 15, 21, cxv. 1, &c.

4. *above the heavens*, &c.] Rather, "in and over" the heavens in which He dwells (Pss. lvii. 3, 5, ciii. 19), which declare His glory (Ps. xix. 1), and in which His strong hero-angels do His bidding (Ps. ciii. 20, 21).

5, 6. *who dwelleth*, &c.] A parallelism of phrase is noticeable in the original, which the A. V. does not preserve.

1. Who is like unto Jehovah our God?
2. Who sits throned on high;
3. Who casts looks so low;
4. In the heavens and the earth?

Some commentators (Hengsten, Bunsen, Delitzsch, &c.) refer to Deut. iii. 24, and connect the first and last of these versicles, "Who is like unto Jehovah our God, in the heavens and the earth, who sits throned on high, who casts," &c.: and it is an argument in favour of this connexion that the versicles inserted between 1 and 4 are peculiar in construction, and easily separable from what precedes and follows. Others (Hupfeld, &c.) render, "Who is like unto Jehovah our God, Who sits high, and looks low, (and sees) all things in the heavens and the earth?" as if the general phrase "sees" were included in the special one, "looks down." But the image of God looking down from His throne above the heavens into the heavens (Meier, &c.) does not seem scriptural; the heavens are His throne, and the earth His footstool, Isai. lxvi. 1. With the general sentiment compare Ps. viii. 3, 4; Isai. lvii. 15.

6 Who humbleth *himself* to behold *the things that are* in heaven, and in the earth!

c 1 Sam. 2. 8. Ps. 107. 41. 7 c He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, *and* lifteth the needy out of the dunghill;

8 That he may set *him* with princes, *even* with the princes of his people.

Heb. to dwell in an house. † 9 He maketh the barren woman to keep house, *and to be* a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the LORD.

PSALM CXIV.

An exhortation, by the example of the dumb creatures, to fear God in his church.

a Exod. 13. 3. WHEN a Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language;

2 Judah was his sanctuary, *and* Israel his dominion.

b Exod. 14. 21. c Josh. 3. 13. 3 b The sea saw *it*, and fled: c Jordan was driven back.

4 The mountains skipped like rams, *and* the little hills like lambs.

5 What *ailed* thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, *that* thou wast driven back?

6 Ye mountains, *that* ye skipped like rams; *and* ye little hills, like lambs?

7 Tremble, thou earth, at the pre-

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7. *He raiseth up*, &c.] The Song of Hannah (1 S. ii. 8) is copied almost word for word. Again, *v.* 9 of the psalm recalls *v.* 5 of the song. Compare the Song of Mary, Luke i. 46, 48, &c.

8. *with the princes of his people*] Not only equal to the princes of the earth, but to the princes of His people chosen of God.

9. *He maketh*, &c.] "He maketh a barren, houseless woman to keep house. (Lo!) a joyful mother of those sons." See the places in the introduction, from Exod. and Sam., which intimate that *a house* in Heb. implies children: without which it is cheerless, and without which the wife has no secure place. A glance in the last versicle is given of the happy mother in her home with her sons.

Olshausen, J. says that the psalm is unfinished, and ends unexpectedly. But not so, if *v.* 9 is its point, and the occasion such as imagined in the introduction.

PSALM CXIV.

A psalm recounting God's miracles in separating His chosen people, and leading them out of Egypt into Canaan.

1. *When Israel*, &c.] *Israel*, and *the house of Jacob*, in this verse are put naturally for the people: *Judah* and *Israel*, *v.* 2, seem put for places; the first for the place in which Jehovah abode (see Exod. xv. 17), the second for the kingdom in which He reigned. So that the meaning is, "When Israel and the house of Jacob came out of Egypt, Judah was His holy habitation, and Israel His dominion." See Ps. lxxviii. 68, 71.

a people of strange language] See Gen. xlii. 23; Ps. lxxxi. 5; also Isai. xxxiii. 19. The strange language is particularized as the sign of a barbarous, unholy people, contrasted with the holy, separated people.

2. *his dominion*] Heb. "His kingdoms," as if He had none other. The idea here prominent, that God, by His miracles in Exodus, purchased for Himself an inheritance, is common in Scripture (Exod. xix. 4, 5, 6; Deut. iv. 20; 1 K. viii. 51), and a frequent topic with which the prophets commence their exhortations. No doubt can exist Whose sanctuary and dominion is intended; the name is (see Ps. lxxxvii. 1) reserved to *v.* 7, where it is uttered exultingly, after the enumeration of His Deeds for His chosen.

3. *The sea saw it*, &c.] Heb. "The sea saw, and fled." The Red Sea and river Jordan are described as foes that fled at the presence of a mightier foe. The Hebrew does not express Whom the sea saw. It saw Him Whose chiding in the beginning (Ps. civ. 7) hurried into their appointed places the waters of the great deep. The passage of the Red Sea, and crossing of Jordan, are specified, as the beginning and end of the miraculous transit. Between them (*v.* 4) are the miracles (Exod. xix. 18) which accompanied the giving of the law. Similar figures occur Pss. xviii. 7, 8, 15, xxix. 6, lxviii. 8; Judg. v. 4.

5. *What ailed*, &c.] Similar addresses in Isai. xxiii. 7 and Ps. lxviii. 16. The Psalmist sees the miracles which he recounts; the sea dividing, Jordan retreating (see Dean Stanley's 'Jewish Church,' Vol. I. p. 229), mountain and hill shaking, at the presence of God; and draws the conclusion which is the crowning point of the psalm, that earth and all within it, river, mountain, sea, had cause for trembling and quaking at His presence, Who is the mighty Lord (Adon); the true God; (Eloah-Jacob); Who made the world and did these wonders, and still can do, for His chosen.

7. *Tremble, thou earth*, &c.] "Tremble as in the pangs of labour." Pss. lxxvii. 16, xxix. 9.

sence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob;

8 [d] Which turned the rock *into* a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters.

[d] Exod. 17. 6. Numb. 20. 11.

PSALM CXV.

1 Because God is truly glorious, 4 and idols are vanity, 9 he exhorteth to confidence in God. 12 God is to be blessed for his blessings.

NOT unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, *and* for thy truth's sake.

2 Wherefore should the heathen say, [a] Where *is* now their God?

3 [b] But our God *is* in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.

[a] Psal. 42. 10. & 79. 10. [b] Psal. 135. 6.

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8. *Which turned*, &c.] The "rock" of Horeb; Exod. xvii. 6: again the "flint" or "rock" of Kadesh; Deut. viii. 15; Num. xx. 11; Ps. cvii. 35.

The date and author of this psalm are unknown. Its energy and fire; its abruptness, brevity, rapidity; its realization of miracles as acting; the astonishment of the Psalmist at the terror of the sea, the flight of Jordan northwards, the quaking of the mountains and all hills; and the conclusion, that a look of the God of Jacob did these miracles, and turned the rock, not into water, but a pool of water, and the flint into a springing fountain, make up, says Herder (E. P. II. 75), a picture of sublimity to which no parallel can be found. No other language could, with propriety and simplicity, express the images contained in the psalm; and no other history (it is needless to say) could furnish truths for the foundation of it.

The psalm is characterized by considerable art. In the most natural way, and without any apparent design, all the most signal miracles of Exodus are told (*vv.* 3, 4, 8), and the crowning inference obtained, unexpectedly as it were, from a simple, unpretending announcement, *v.* 1. Some commentators (*e. g.* Hengsten) imagine the psalm to have been composed after the exile, when kings and kingdoms conspired against the restored people, to confirm their faith by the record of God's ancient doings. The spirit of the beautiful poem is destroyed by such hypothesis, for which there is no solid foundation. In *v.* 7 there is no reference to the present: rather, the earth shaken and subdued, at the time vividly realized as present, is apostrophized. The characteristics described above, brevity, force, rapidity, intense faith, personification of natural objects, and, we may add, the subject, the miracles of Exodus exclusively, suggest a very early date for the psalm.

The following places in the psalms refer to the miracles of Exodus:—lxviii. 8, 22, lxxiv. 13, lxxvii. 17, 18, lxxviii. 13, 14, 20, 53, cvi. 9—22, cxxxvi. 13—15. Other references in Scripture are Job xxvi. 12; Isai. l. 2, li. 10, &c.; Jer. xxxi. 35; Joel ii. 10; Hab. iii. 8, 15; Nah. i. 4; Neh. ix. 10; to which many more might be added. It is hard to imagine any hypothesis, except the truth of the grand events alluded to, which could have led to such an echo of them throughout all generations of Jews.

PSALM CXV.

A characteristic of this psalm is a frequent allusion to, or quotation of, Isaiah. It may have been written somewhat late in Jewish history (see *v.* 4), and in a time of perplexity and peril. The purport of it is, confidence in God (*vv.* 1—4); contempt of all other gods (*vv.* 4—8); exhortation to trust and hope (*vv.* 9, 10, 11): from a recollection of the past (*vv.* 12—15); and from general thoughts of His doings for man (*vv.* 16—18).

The iterations (*vv.* 9, 10, 11, 12, 13) suggest the idea of a psalm for temple service: with which compare Pss. cxviii. 1—4, cxxxv. 19, 20, cxlviii. 1—4, &c.

In some Heb. MSS. of Kenn. and de Rossi, and in LXX., Vulg., Syr., Ar., &c. this psalm is connected with the preceding. But there is no connection between the subjects of the two psalms: and the symmetry and completeness of Ps. cxiv. are conspicuous. Ewald conjectures that the psalm was sung whilst the sacrifice was offered, and that *vv.* 12—15 were spoken by the priest declaring the acceptance of it; *vv.* 1—11 being sung by the congregation, and again *vv.* 16—18 by the same. It would suit an occasion of thanksgiving, as well as of trial: the tone of the early verses is rather joyous than sad.

1. *Not unto us*, &c.] The request for Divine aid, says Calvin, is rather insinuated than directly preferred; at the same time a confession is made of unworthiness to obtain any favour; which can only flow out of God's mere grace, and from the recollection of His name and fame as a God of Deliverances. See Isai. xlviii. 9; Dan. ix. 18, 19.

2. *Wherefore*, &c.] See Exod. xxxii. 12; Num. xiv. 13, 14; Pss. xlii. 3, 10; lxxix. 10: the last the identical words of the psalm; it is not easy to decide which place is the original: see also Joel ii. 17.

3. *But our God*, &c.] And all the while our God is in Heaven, not as vain idols, close to us, on earth: and does always as it pleaseth Him to do. See Ps. cxxxv. 6

Psal. 135. 15.

4 [c] Their idols *are* silver and gold, the work of men's hands.

5 They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not:

6 They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not:

7 They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat.

8 They that make them are like unto them; *so is* every one that trusteth in them.

9 O Israel, trust thou in the LORD: he *is* their help and their shield.

10 O house of Aaron, trust in the LORD: he *is* their help and their shield.

11 Ye that fear the LORD, trust in the LORD: he *is* their help and their shield.

12 The LORD hath been mindful of us: he will bless *us;* he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron.

13 He will bless them that fear the LORD, *both* small [†] and great.

† Heb. *with.*

14 The LORD shall increase you more and more, you and your children.

15 Ye *are* blessed of the LORD which made heaven and earth.

16 The heaven, *even* the heavens, *are* the LORD's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.

17 The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence.

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4. *Their idols*, &c.] Compare Ps. cxxxv. 15, 18, &c.; also Deut. iv. 28; Isai. xxxvii. 19, xliv. 9—20; Jer. x. 3—5; Wisd. xv. 15. The impotence of idols compared with the living God is a frequent topic with the later prophets. Hengsten. observes that these reiterated comparisons of Jehovah with idols, which may seem needless in this day, were pointed and necessary in the days of Isaiah and Jeremiah; when the whole world, except a small corner of it, was given over to idolatry.

7. *neither speak they*] Or, "mutter any sound," Isai. xxxviii. 14, *through their throat:* the throat the organ of speech; Pss. v. 9, cxlix. 6, see marg.; Isai. lviii. 1, Heb.

8. *They that make them*, &c.] Are, or, are becoming, like to them, *i.e.* nought, powerless, and senseless: Isai. xliv. 9, 10.

9, 10, 11. *O Israel*, &c.] The order of the original in this burden of the song is expressive: "O Israel, trust in the Lord: their help and their shield is He!" We should rather have expected, "Our help and our shield," &c. But the burden, thrice introduced, appears to be a well-known formula of praise. *Their, i.e.* "of all who trust in Him." The verses contain a climax: (1) Israel in general is addressed; (2) the priests or ministers of God's service; (3) the true Israelites; not only chosen out of all people, or out of the chosen people for outward service, but serving God in sincerity of heart: compare Pss. cxviii. 2—4, cxxxv. 19, 20, in which latter place the house of Levi is distinguished from that of Aaron.

13. *both small and great*] A common expression for all, without exception: Jer. vi. 13, xvi. 6, xxxi. 34; Jonah iii. 5; Apoc. xx. 12.

14. *The LORD*, &c.] "Shall add to your numbers, and multiply you and your children, according to His promise," Deut. i. 11: see also 2 S. xxiv. 3; Gen. xxx. 24. Calvin, Luther, &c. interpret, "shall add blessings to you and your children."

15. "Maker of heaven and earth." See Pss. cxxi. 2, cxxiv. 8, cxxxiv. 3, &c.

16. *the heaven*, &c.] Heb. "The heavens (are) heavens (*i.e.* a dwelling-place) for the Lord; the earth has He given," &c. A somewhat similar idea, Acts xvii. 24. It may be that the mention of two dwelling-places (*i.e.* heaven and earth) suggests, *v.* 17, the mention of a third, to wit, the land of silence, darkness, and death-shade (compare Ps. xciv. 17), in which none praise Him. The passage seems of very little significance in reference to the doctrine of the soul's immortality as taught in the Psalms. The dead, who have passed away from God's presence (such is the import of the words), and ceased to receive present succour in trouble (see Hezekiah's prayer, Isai. xxxviii. 18, 19, which much resemble *vv.* 17 and 18 of the psalm), and are in darkness and gloom afar from Him, cannot praise Him as we do, and will, who are all but in His glorious presence. Such passages as this *v.* 17 of the psalm, with which compare Pss. vi. 5, xxx. 9, lxxxviii. 10—12, and the places quoted from Isai., simply indicate an ignorance of the state of the soul after death; and cannot be employed, with any appearance of reason, to prove a belief on the part of the Psalmist or of Hezekiah in future extinction of being.

18 [d] But we will bless the LORD from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the LORD.

[d] Dan. 2. 20.

PSALM CXVI.

1 The psalmist professeth his love and duty to God for his deliverance. 12 He studieth to be thankful.

I LOVE the LORD, because he hath heard my voice *and* my supplications.

2 Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon *him* [†] as long as I live.

3 [a] The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell [†] gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.

4 Then called I upon the name of the LORD; O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.

5 Gracious *is* the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God *is* merciful.

6 The LORD preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me.

7 Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee.

8 For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, *and* my feet from falling.

9 I will walk before the LORD in the land of the living.

10 [b] I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted:

[†] Heb. *in my days.*

[a] Ps. 18. 5, 6

[†] Heb. *found me.*

[b] 2 Cor. 4. 13.

PSALM CXVI.

A psalm of thanksgiving of an Israelite for deliverance out of imminent peril, interspersed with repeated promises of vows and offerings to be paid in public to his Deliverer: at what time composed, or in recollection of what critical trial, is uncertain. The Aramaisms (Hupfeld, Delitzsch, &c.) in the psalm, and imitations of other psalms (specially of David), point to a late date. A portion of it is used in the English Church for the service of the Churching of Women; and, in spite of Hupfeld's criticism, seems full of pathos, tenderness, joy that overflows, stedfast faith, and a noble courage; and its use never wearies. In the LXX. and Vulg. the psalm is divided at *v.* 10, and forms two psalms, which in those translations are numbered 114 and 115, each beginning with Hallelujah.

A Jewish tradition refers the psalm to Hezekiah: many resemblances (Kay, &c.) are noticed between it and Isai. xxxvii. and xxxviii. Resemblances to Pss. xviii. and cxviii. are pointed out below.

Vv. 1—4, a description of the sorrow out of which God delivered: *vv.* 5—11, His praise for mercies vouchsafed, and His servant's gratitude; which (*vv.* 12—14) must be shewn in public thankofferings and thanksgivings: continued to the end.

1. *I love the* LORD, &c.] Or, rather, "I love or have loved, *i.e.* with my whole heart." The object of this tender love is not expressed. Cf. Ps. xviii. init.; and with *vv.* 3, 4 cf. *v.* 5 of Ps. cxviii.

3. *The sorrows of death*, &c.] Heb. "The cords of death (see *v.* 16) encircled me; the straits of hell laid hold of me or caught me," Ps. cxix. 143; Exod. xviii. 8 (Heb.). The word rendered "pains" (in the A.V.) occurs only here, in Ps. cxviii. 5, in the sing., and in Lam. i. 3. In the latter place the A.V. has "the straits," which meaning suits also the passage in Ps. cxviii. Instead of *metsorē* (straits), Hupfeld reads *metsodē* (nets), which is not necessary, yet possible.

4. *O* LORD, *I beseech thee*, &c.] The same expression in the Heb. as in *v.* 16, "Even so, I pray deliver," &c.

5. *Gracious is the* LORD, &c.] See Pss. ciii. 13, cxi. 4, cxii. 4, &c.

6. *the simple*] Who are without guile, and open to assault, as children.

7. *thy rest*, &c.] That rest, the opposite of death and hell (*v.* 3), which flows from trust in God: Ps. xxiii. 2, 3; cf. Pss. xlii. 5—11, xliii. 5.

9. *I will walk*, &c.] Or, "I shall walk," &c.

in the land of the living] See Pss. xxvii. 13, lii. 5: in Ps. lvi. 13, which is plainly referred to, it is, "the light of the living."

10, 11. *I believed*, &c.] Or, perhaps, "I believed when I said," or, "I believe when I say," &c. The meaning is obscure. See Ps. xxxix. 3, where the tongue at last expresses what long had burnt within: here, it may be that, at last, the Psalmist speaks what he had long time believed; and his speech is (*vv.* 7, 8, 9, 10, &c.), "Thou hast rescued my soul," &c. "I shall walk again before God; I was sore afflicted, and said in my haste," &c. (Ps. xxxi. 22); the general import being: God is faithful, man faithless; this I believe, and said, and say. Ewald supposes that the Psalmist's experience of man's untrustworthiness

c Rom. 3. 4.

11 I said in my haste, c All men *are* liars.

12 What shall I render unto the LORD *for* all his benefits toward me?

13 I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD.

14 I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people.

15 Precious in the sight of the LORD *is* the death of his saints.

16 O LORD, truly I *am* thy servant; I *am* thy servant, *and* the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds.

17 I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD.

18 I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people,

19 In the courts of the LORD's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.

PSALM CXVII.

An exhortation to praise God for his mercy and truth.

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was obtained in Babylonish exile: but experience could be furnished nearer home.

liars] The meaning may be "hypocrites," apt to desert in trouble, and to cling in prosperity.

13. *the cup of salvation*, &c.] Heb. "of deliverances." Below (*vv.* 14, 18, 19) a thank-offering is plainly mentioned, and a vow to be performed openly. Hence, it is imagined by some (Rosenm. &c.) that a feast followed such thank-offering, and that a cup, here called a cup of deliverances, was passed round the guests after such feast, to which allusion is made. On the great festival of Passover, after the feast a cup of thanksgiving was passed round (Matt. xxvi. 27). But no Old Testament Scripture refers plainly to any such general custom as that supposed. The drink-offerings of wine (Num. xxviii. 7) do not illustrate this place. In the absence of any authority for a literal acceptation of "cup of salvation," Hengsten. and others consider the word used figuratively, as in Pss. xi. 6, xvi. 5, xxiii. 5, lxxv. 8, &c., and the meaning to be, "I will receive and enjoy the 'lot of salvation,' or the 'prosperous joyous lot' which God has given." Hupfeld adduces the well-known Arabian phrases, a "cup of death," a "cup of love," with which he compares a "cup of deliverances." But the expression, "I will take or raise the cup of deliverances," *i.e.* "the gift of deliverance," seems improper, and pointless. The second clause of the verse occurs three times in this Ps. *vv.* 4, 13, 17.

14. *now in the presence*, &c.] "Openly it shall be done; in the presence," &c. Ps. lvi. 12.

15. *Precious*, &c.] Delitzsch observes that Babylas, Bishop of Antioch, in the Decian persecution, advanced cheerfully to death, singing these words. See Ps. lxxii. 14. The Apostolical Constitutions (vi. 30) recommend, among others, this verse to be sung at the funeral of the faithful.

16. *O LORD, truly*, &c.] These words seem to commence the formal thanksgiving of the worshipper: "Even so, LORD, listen! for *I am Thy servant:*" see the title to Ps. xviii.; and Pss. lxxxvi. 2, 4, lxxxix. 3, 20, 39, cxix. passim.

son of thine handmaid] Ps. lxxxvi. 16.

my bonds] He speaks as if bound to the altar of sacrifice: see *v.* 3.

18. *now in the presence*, &c.] As in *v.* 14: "openly it shall be done, in the presence," &c. The repetition of the words expresses the fixed resolve of the Psalmist.

19. *In the courts of the LORD's house*, &c.] See 2 K. xx. 5; Isai. xxxviii. 22. Kay quotes these places as confirming the idea that the psalm is Hezekiah's. Vaihinger and others consider it written by Zerubbabel: if not by him, by some Israelite, whose memory is indeed stored with passages of the psalms, but of an original genius and deeply earnest faith.

PSALM CXVII.

The Psalmist exhorts all people (xcvi. 1, c. 1) to praise Jehovah for His mercy and faithfulness; cf. Pss. xlvii. 1, lxvi. 1, xcviii. 4, 7. The brevity of the psalm suggests to some (Rosenm. &c.) that it was used liturgically as a formula of dismissal of worshippers after service; or, perhaps, as an introduction to a longer psalm. It is joined to Ps. cxviii, in 27 MSS. of Kenn. and De Rossi, and to Ps. cxvi. in 32 MSS. On the other hand, Delitzsch observes that though brief it expresses the essence of all Messianic psalms. Hence, Cassiodorus calls it "Punctum Psalmorum," as being amongst psalms what a point is among geometrical figures. It resembles Ps. c. in many respects.

In Rom. xv. 11 the Apostle developes the idea which is the germ of the psalm: it calls upon the heathen to praise God for His mercy and truth exhibited to His chosen, in which the heathen will one day share; Deut. xxxii. 43.

[a] Rom. 15. 11.

O [a]PRAISE the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people.

2 For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD *endureth* for ever. Praise ye the LORD.

PSALM CXVIII.

1 *An exhortation to praise God for his mercy.*
5 *The psalmist by his experience sheweth how*

1. *all ye nations*] Or, "Gentiles," Ps. ii. 1. The Chald. form (Hupfeld) of the word *people* is used; the fem. Hebrew form occurs Gen. xxv. 16; Num. xxv. 15.

2. *For his merciful kindness*, &c.] Heb. "His mercy." See Ps. cxv. 1, where mercy and truth are joined.

is great] See ciii. 11.

endureth for ever] so the LXX.: *μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα*, not as Luther translates, "is great in eternity."

PSALM CXVIII.

A song of thanksgiving. After the proœmium (1—4) follows an exposition of the occasion of the psalm. Innumerable foes encompassed the Psalmist round about, and threatened instant destruction, but his faith gave him courage, and did not deceive him (*vv.* 5—18). He enters the temple-gates to praise and bless Jehovah (*vv.* 19—21). The people (apparently) mingles its joy and rejoicing with the thanks and prayers of the Psalmist (*vv.* 22—25). The priests (or people) within the temple receive him with blessings, offerings, and prayers for the future (*vv.* 26, 27). The conclusion (*vv.* 28, 29).

It is however a question whether the Psalmist is a prince whom Jehovah (Jah) has delivered, or whether a Chorus sings in the people's name: *vv.* 2, 3, 5, &c. seem rather to favour the latter opinion, it being supposed that the people speaks sometimes in the first person singular (*vv.* 5—21), sometimes perhaps in the third person singular (*v.* 22), sometimes in the first person plural (*vv.* 23, 24). The speakers certainly change at the places specified above. Ewald, Tholuck, &c., imagine other changes (as at *vv.* 5, 19, 20, 21, 26, 28), but there is no end to mere hypothesis.

The psalm is the last of the group of psalms (cxiii.—cxviii.) which constituted the Hallel sung upon the chief festivals.

A not uncommon opinion refers the psalm to David: some incline to the date (2 S. v. 1—5) when, after the death of Ishbosheth, he was anointed king, and when, after the conquest of the Philistines and other neighbouring peoples, he brought the ark of God with great pomp to Zion. Rudinger and others imagine a later date after the conquest above mentioned, and after the four battles described 2 S. xxi., in one of which (2 S. xxi. 16) the life of the king was in imminent peril. But the inscription does not assign the psalm to David, and it wants his characteristic traits; and evidently, from its language and contents, belongs to a later date. Dœderlein applies the psalm to Hezekiah (cf. *v.* 17 with Isai. xxxviii. 1), who was exposed to fearful peril by the invasion of Sennacherib, and whose life too was brought nigh to death by a terrible malady; but *v.* 22 does not apply to him with any propriety. Others (Hengsten., and this is the most common view) conceive the psalm to have been composed soon after the return from exile, in celebration either (1) of the Feast of Tabernacles (Ezra iii. 1—4); or (2) the laying of the foundation-stone of the Temple (iii. 8—13); or (3) the dedication of the Temple (vi. 15—18); or (4) the Feast of Tabernacles (Neh. viii. 14). According to any one of these suppositions it is not a chief or leader that details his trials and escapes in *vv.* 5—19, but the people of God; see the second paragraph. It must also be said that not a word of the psalm carries us at once to any one of the occasions after exile specified above.

The well-known phrases (*vv.* 1, 29 and 2—4), compared with Pss. cxv. and cxxxvi., seem to indicate a psalm adapted to Temple-service. The descriptions of peril are general (*vv.* 5, 10). The recurrence of *burdens*, in *vv.* 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, &c., *It is better*, &c., *For in the name of the* LORD, &c., *The right hand of the* LORD, &c., seem also to suggest a Temple-psalm, sung, it may be, by two or more choruses. Also the mention of the singers (*vv.* 2, 3, 4), similar to that in cxxxv. 19, &c., the many phrases borrowed from other Scriptures, and the allusions (*vv.* 24 seq.) to a festival and its accompaniments, fall in better with this idea than with that of a single special occasion.

The texts Matt. xxi. 42; Mark xii. 10; Luke xx. 17; Acts iv. 11, shew that the psalm was commonly referred to Messiah in the days of our Lord. Many Rabbins, ancient and modern, interpret the psalm of Him; and Jerome says that the ancient Jews so interpreted it—a statement confirmed by the texts just quoted and by the acclamations of the people, (taken from *vv.* 25, 26), with which they received Christ on His entry into Jerusalem (Matt. xxi. 9).

The first few verses contain the introduction to the psalm, which sets forth who they are that should praise and bless Jehovah on the day of praise.

good it is to trust in God. 19 *Under the type of the psalmist the coming of Christ in his kingdom is expressed.*

[a] 1 Chro. 16. 8. Ps. 106. 1. & 107. 1. & 136. 1.

O [a]GIVE thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: because his mercy *endureth* for ever.

2 Let Israel now say, that his mercy *endureth* for ever.

3 Let the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy *endureth* for ever.

4 Let them now that fear the LORD say, that his mercy *endureth* for ever.

† Heb. *out of distress.* [b] Ps. 56. 4, 11. Hebr. 13. 6. † Heb. *for me.*

5 I called upon the LORD † in distress: the LORD answered me, *and set me* in a large place.

6 [b]The LORD *is* †on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?

7 The LORD taketh my part with them that help me: therefore shall I see *my desire* upon them that hate me.

8 *It is* better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.

9 [c]*It is* better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes. [c] Ps. 146. 3.

10 All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD will I †destroy them. † Heb. *cut them off.*

11 They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.

12 They compassed me about like

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1. *O give thanks*, &c.] See the places in the marg. and Ps. cxv. 9—13; "O praise God for His mercies, of old, and now." These words were sung by the Levites at the time of laying the foundation-stone of the second Temple (Ezra iii. 11), but they are a common formula of thanksgiving. See 1 Chro. xvi. 34, and 2 Chro. v. 13, vii. 3; Jer. xxxiii. 10, 11.

because his mercy, &c.] This is the "burden" of the song; and a better rendering would be, "For His mercy," &c.; or, "That His mercy," &c. as in *vv.* 2, 3, 4.

3. *the house of Aaron*, &c.] Some imagine "They that fear the LORD," &c. to be the proselytes at the gate, Ezra l.c., Acts xiii. 16, 26; but in all probability *vv.* 2, 3, 4 contain a sort of climax: (1) Israel in general, (2) the house of Aaron, (3) the true Israel: compare Ps. cxv. 9—11, and Note.

5. *I called upon the* LORD, &c.] The people (see p. 438), or the victorious leader, proclaim the mercy of Jehovah, as instanced in deed. Lit. "I called upon Jah (Who saved out of Egypt, Ex. xv. 2) out of trouble or strait (see Ps. cxvi. 3), and He answered me in an open plain," *i.e.* answered me, and brought me into a wide open space (Pss. iv. 1, xviii. 19, xxxi. 8), in which I could breathe freely. A similar ellipsis occurs Eccles. v. 20: God answereth him in (restoring) joy of heart. The LXX. render ἐπήκουσέ μου εἰς πλατυσμόν, as if, says Kay, the act of enlargement were the answer. Symm. ἐ. μ. εἰς εὐρυχωρίαν.

6. *I will not fear*, &c.] Ps. lvi. 4—11.

7. *with them that help*, &c.] Rather, "Jehovah is on my side with them that help me;" not as if Jehovah were one of many helpers, but among helpers to help them: Ps. liv. 4: see too Judg. v. 14.

therefore shall I see, &c.] See Ps. liv. 7, cxii. 8.

9. *princes*] See Ps. cxlvi. 3. These words, in all probability, were said, not as of course, in full security, but in the midst of extremest peril, or after an almost miraculous escape, through Jehovah, Omnipotent Helper!

10. *All nations*, &c.] An incongruity arises from the past tenses. "All nations compassed me," &c. coupled with the future, "but in the name of the LORD will I destroy (LXX. ἠμυνάμην,) them." But it must be recollected that the latter words are one of the "burdens" of the psalm, and express what the Psalmist *always* can do, and will do, through the aid of Jehovah. Lit. "In the name of Jehovah 'tis certain that I shall destroy them." The A.V. does not render the particle (כִּי), which expresses the full amount of confidence felt; cf. Ps. cxxviii. 2. *All nations* must be understood, not historically, but poetically. The supposition of Delitzsch, Moll, &c. that the past tense does not describe a fact, but only an hypothesis ("Though all nations compass me," &c. "in the name of the LORD will I destroy them"), sacrifices the point and poetry of the words, which undoubtedly describe actual experience. Perowne remarks that the repetition four times of the words, *they compassed me about* marks the pertinacious animosity of the enemies described.

12. *like bees*] *i.e.* with innumerable thronging numbers, and a furious desire to destroy.

bees; they are quenched as the fire of thorns: for in the name of the LORD I will † destroy them.

† Heb. *cut down.*

13 Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall: but the LORD helped me.

14 [d]The LORD *is* my strength and song, and is become my salvation.

[d] Exod. 15. 2. Isai. 12. 2.

15 The voice of rejoicing and salvation *is* in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.

16 The right hand of the LORD is exalted: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.

17 I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD.

18 The LORD hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death.

19 Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, *and* I will praise the LORD:

20 This gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter.

21 I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation.

See Deut. i. 44; Isai. vii. 18; Virg. 'Georg.' IV. 236.

they are quenched, &c.] Attacking with prodigious rage, and seeming as though they would utterly destroy the devoted city, they suddenly perish, and no trace of them abides, as fire among thorns blazes up suddenly with vast heat (Ps. lviii. 9, where see note) and crackling, and directly dies out, leaving no trace; see Isai. xxxiii. 12. "Thorn bushes, in the East, are destroyed in the cultivated fields by fire in the heat of summer. The fire quickly spreads everywhere, but soon dies out, and the bushes are reduced to ashes."—Knapp.

13. *Thou hast thrust*, &c.] "Thou hast striven hard, O mine enemy, and pushed at me sore, that I should fall: but Jehovah sustained me." In Ps. xxxv. 5, the Angel of God threatens and pushes (A. V. *chases*) His enemies. The people, or prince, apostrophizes the enemy as one.

14. *The LORD*, &c.] The signal miracles of deliverance, whatever they were, recall the miracles of old, Ex. xv. 2: see too Isai. xii. 2, where the same words occur. All praise (such is the import) be to Jehovah, from Whom, in days past, came miraculous, effectual aid, and now comes.

15. *The voice*, &c.] The voice of joy and rejoicing is heard not only in palaces of princes, and in public, but everywhere, in the tabernacles or dwellings (Ps. lxxviii. 55, xci. 10) of all true Israelites, (Ps. xxxiii. 1), on account of the blessings bestowed upon His chosen. The next versicle (with which compare Ex. xv. 6, 12; Num. xxiv. 18; and *v.* 16) contains the words in which Jehovah's worshippers everywhere express their sense of His doings.

16. *The right hand of the LORD is exalted*] *i. e.* "high above all other hands" (see Job xxiv. 24), or, perhaps, actively, "exalts," "supports," see Ps. xxxvii. 34.

17. *I shall not die*, &c.] The speaker, draws a general conclusion from what goes before in reference to his own fortunes: "I shall not die, as mine enemies wish, and have all but accomplished, but live, and publish the miracles of Jehovah's mercy." This verse was hung up by Luther in his study; and was his favourite verse of a favourite psalm. He says, "Though I love all the psalms, yet I delight in this psalm especially, and look upon it as written specially for me; indeed it has come to my aid again and again, and supported me in heavy trials, when kaiser, king, philosopher, and saint, could do nought."

18. *The LORD*, &c.] His mercy is shewn in this: He chastened me sore for the sake of correction and instruction, (Isai. xxvii. 7), yet suffered me not to perish, but saved me, to sing His praise. Cf. Jer. x. 24, xxx. 11, &c.

19. *Open to me the gates*, &c.] A similar address Ps. xxiv. 7. The *gates of righteousness* are so called, probably, because the righteous people (see next verse) pass through them to worship. See Pss. v. 2, 5, 6, 7; xvi. 1; also Ps. iv. 5, *Sacrifices of righteousness*. Or the meaning may be "gates which lead to His temple, Who is the well and fountain of righteousness" (see *v.* 26). The supposition (Bunsen, Hupfeld, &c.) that the "gates of righteousness" are ideal, and that the words simply express a hope on the part of the Psalmist of entering God's temple, and thus venting his enthusiastic feelings of love and gratitude, is scarcely consistent with *v.* 20, and deprives the words of almost all interest.

20. *This gate*, &c.] Rather, "this gate (belongs to) the LORD." *the righteous*, *i. e.*

[e] Matth. 21. 42. Mark 12. 10. Luke 20. 17. Acts 4. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 4.

22 [e] The stone *which* the builders refused is become the head *stone* of the corner.

[†] Heb. *This is from the* LORD.

23 [†] This is the LORD's doing; it *is* marvellous in our eyes.

24 This *is* the day *which* the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

25 Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity.

[f] Matth. 21. 9.

26 [f] Blessed *be* he that cometh in the name of the LORD: we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD.

27 God *is* the LORD, which hath

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the Israelite people, enter through it. The gate of the Israelites was upon the East side of the outer vestibule.

22. *The stone which*, &c.] Probably the words are proverbial. "A stone (De Wette), they say, rejected of the builders as useless, has been chosen, and set in the place of chiefest importance in the palace or temple;" *i.e.* "a people once rejected and of no account is now restored and re-established, and counted as a foundation-stone of the temple of God, which He is setting up upon the earth"—so Kimchi: or, "a ruler or prince, once neglected, and of no account, is now a victor and ruler, and, it may be, High Priest, of the chosen people." The meaning of the word "corner stone" is doubtful. Some understand the "foundation stone," upon which the building rests; Job xxxviii. 6; Jer. li. 26; Eph. ii. 20, 21. Others, the "epistyle," or long block of stone resting upon the top of the columns supporting the roof, Zech. iv. 7. Such stones in Egyptian temples seem to serve the purpose of wooden beams. The word of Jehovah, Isai. xxviii. 16, Perowne remarks, seems to connect this place with the New Testament quotations of it.

23. *This is the* LORD'S *doing*, &c.] *This*, *i. e.* that the stone rejected is become the head stone, &c.

marvellous] *i. e.* miraculous.

24. *This is the day*, &c.] This is the day which Jehovah has *made glorious;* see 1 S. xii. 6: *It is the Lord that advanced* (Heb. made) *Moses and Aaron.* The day on which Jehovah's gift is celebrated, not necessarily the day on which it is bestowed, is meant.

25. *Save now*, &c.] Or, "Save, I pray," σῶσον δή, LXX. See Ps. xii. 1, xxviii. 9, &c.; also Ps. cxvi. 4, 16; Neh. i. 11, for similar phrases, or parts of the phrase used. The original word, *Hosannah*, or, "Save, I pray," is repeated, with the verse following, by the multitude, in their enthusiastic welcome of Messiah into His kingdom, Matt. xxi. 9.

26. *Blessed be he*, &c.] "Blessed be He" that enters (*vv.* 19, 20), in the name, *i. e.* under the guardianship, of Jehovah, into His sanctuary: or, according to the accents, Blessed in the name of Jehovah (Deut. xxi. 5; Num. vi. 27; 2 S. vi. 11) be "everyone" (the sing. used collectively) that enters into the courts of Jehovah.

we have blessed, &c.] "We bless you from the sanctuary of God, out of which comes true blessing, and into which he who is blessed is entering." The second versicle probably repeats in other phrase the sentiment of the first; see Ruth ii. 4; Ps. cxxix. 8, &c. This verse may probably be added to the list, p. 439, &c., of Liturgic formulæ. The festive procession possibly which sings the psalm (*vv.* 5—18), in the name of the people, or which accompanies the prince victorious, enters the Temple-gates (at verse 20), and sings the remaining verses of the psalm within the Sanctuary.

27. *which hath shewed us*, &c.] *Light*, in the wilderness by the pillar of fire, Ex. xiii. 22, xiv. 20; Neh. ix. 12. We may supply "and will again *shew light* in darkness, or *give aid* in trouble."

bind the sacrifice, &c.] Bind the victim (Ex. xxiii. 18) with cords, and lead it to the altar, to the very horns, (see Dean Stanley, 'Jewish Church,' Vol. II. p. 209), to one of which the victim was fastened. Luther, Tholuck, and others, interpret differently: "Decorate the festival with leafy boughs, even up to the horns of the altar." See Neh. viii. 15, 16, for the custom supposed to be referred to. But it is doubtful if the Hebrew will bear this meaning: and "the decorations which reach to the horns of the altar," seem hard to conceive. The common interpretation is supported by the best authorities. With *v.* 28 cf. Ex. xv. 2.

It is difficult, in any translation, to convey an idea of the reality, fire, intensity of faith, which this psalm expresses. It carries us at once into the midst of a joyous festival (*v.* 24), celebrated, apparently, on account of some signal deliverance. The spirit, tone, and language (De Wette) forbid the supposition of its origin in the days of the Maccabees; and no time in late Jewish history points to any chief who could with propriety have uttered verses 5—19, &c. in his own person. On the other hand, the point of the psalm appears to suffer by

shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, *even* unto the horns of the altar.

28 Thou *art* my God, and I will praise thee: *thou art* my God, I will exalt thee.

29 O give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

PSALM CXIX.

This psalm containeth sundry prayers, praises, and professions of obedience.

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the supposition that the speaker is the people, or a chorus for the people: and *vv.* 17, 18 can scarcely with any propriety be applied to a people. Yet one or two verses (23, 27) fall in easily with this hypothesis; and places in Isaiah, as chapter xlii., and of Jeremiah, as Lam. i. 12, &c. are parallel to it on this supposition, describing, as they do, the people of God under the image of His servant, acting, suffering, or praying, as the case may be. Many verses of the psalm are applied to Christ in the New Testament (see p. 438), and seem in fact to obtain their full significance only in Him. In this sense the psalm is Messianic; and other psalms may be instanced in which the voice of the people is consciously or unconsciously the voice of Messiah the Prince. David may have written the first germ of the psalm; Hezekiah may have used it on his recovery from mortal sickness, or his deliverance from peril of the Assyrians. Other additions may have been made in after times to suit occasions which emerged: and a psalm written in the first instance to thank God for mercies shewn to one pre-eminent among his people, may have been used for occasions in which the people, or a chorus for it, speaks and sings.

PSALM CXIX.

A hymn in praise of the law, which is mentioned in every verse of the psalm, except *vv.* 122 and 132, sometimes as the law, sometimes as His testimonies, commandments, statutes, precepts, judgments, truth, way, righteousness, etc. The connexion of thoughts and images is not apparent, as might be expected in an alphabetical psalm. The law of God is a practical counsellor, and he that walks by it walks in the light, *vv.* 24, 59, 105, &c.: it is the word of God and abides for ever, *vv.* 89, 90, 96, 152, 160: by it the world is ruled, and will for ever be ruled, *v.* 91: it is the guide of youth and a polar star, so to say, to lead the young safely to a haven of rest, *v.* 9: it comes from One Who is so greatly to be feared that the flesh of the Psalmist trembles at the thought of His judgments, *v.* 120: but is withal so excellent, and is found experimentally to be so precious, that it is his treasure, and far better than gold and silver, *vv.* 56, 57, 72, 127, 162, 111. The more it is pondered the more it is found to contain in it the highest wisdom and supremest cunning, and to be full of miracles, *vv.* 18, 27: in sharp trial it alone gives comfort, *vv.* 28, 50, 92: by sorrow and suffering only can a true understanding of it be obtained, *vv.* 67, 71, 75: a knowledge of it makes its fortunate possessor wiser than his teachers or than the ancients, *vv.* 99, 100: the neglect of it by many causes to the Psalmist bitterest sorrow, *vv.* 53, 136, 139, 158: his most eager desire is that its excellence and preciousness should be known far and wide, *v.* 46: if persecution and shame should be his portion on account of it he must bear his lot without wavering, *vv.* 61, 109, 157, 161: if contemned and persecuted on its account by the enemies of God, so much the more steadily must he converse and consort with His friends and worshippers, *vv.* 63, 79.

Interspersed are prayers for grace and assistance to live according to the law, and to escape the misery which marks its violation, *vv.* 17, 18, 25, 36, 64, 125; together with assertions of innocence before God and man in respect of any sin deliberate and malicious, *vv.* 55, 101, 102; and entreaties for God's favour, according to His wont, *vv.* 34, 40, 132, 134.

Some imagine the psalm to have been written by David, before his accession to the kingdom, in exile and peril; *vv.* 9, 23, 46, 141, 161, seem to favour this view. Others (of chief authority) from the language and contents imagine the psalm to be of much later date. Jebb, Vol. II. p. 274, supposes the author to be Daniel: many conceive Ezra to be its author; Dean Stanley, 'Jew. Ch.' II. 527, says of the rhythm that it seems to mark the age of Jeremiah. Kay supposes it to depict the mental state of those who have passed through the discipline of the captivity. During that long monotonous period, he says, of servitude, the memory of God's law came back to the faithful remnant, and stirred up deep longing for past privileges. Hitzig, as usual, refers the psalm to the days of the Maccabees: see 1 Macc. xii. 48. At whatever time written, it seems written by one of signal condition, overshadowed with trials, despised, persecuted, in deepest peril, through the machinations of the enemies of God, as well as his own enemies, *vv.* 23, 46, 161; and yet confident of aid through long experience of God's mercy.

Ewald says that the psalm contains few

א ALEPH.

‖ Or, *perfect*, or, *sincere*.

BLESSED *are* the ‖undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD.

2 Blessed *are* they that keep his testimonies, *and that* seek him with the whole heart.

3 They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways.

4 Thou hast commanded *us* to keep thy precepts diligently.

5 O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!

6 Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments.

7 I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned ‡thy righteous judgments.

‡ Heb. *judgments of thy righteousness.*

8 I will keep thy statutes: O forsake me not utterly.

ב BETH.

9 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed *thereto* according to thy word.

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sparks of poetical fire. It contains many repetitions and imitations of earlier psalms; and its alphabetical arrangement is essentially unpoetical: but no part of Scripture is more deeply imprinted upon memory, especially of the young, than portions of it; nor is any Scripture more suggestive of edifying trains of thought; nor is any other Scripture of the Old Testament more saturated, so to say, with a spirit all but Christian, of humility, trust, devoted love to God, and realization of His near Presence, than this psalm: which is an epitome of all true religion, and must be studied by any one who wishes to fathom the meaning of the Law; and the elevation of soul, the hope, joy, confidence felt in presence of kings and princes, by pious Jews.

It is divided into 22 equal portions according to the number of the letters of the alphabet. To each portion its own letter is prefixed, and every verse in that portion in the original begins with the same letter. The sacred name Jehovah occurs 22 times; though not once in each section corresponding to a letter. Other alphabetical Pss. are ix., xxv., xxxiv., xxxvii., cxi., cxii., cxlv.: (see the notes upon these psalms). It is a reasonable supposition that all such psalms were written to assist memory: and the artificial construction of this particular psalm suggests a late date for its composition; which also best accords with its tone and manner, its reference to proud ones, princes, and persecutors, and complaints of violence and wrong.

Eight words, at least, are employed to express God's word, or law, or revealed truth. Some commentators define accurately the import of each of such terms: but it does not appear that they are used, in the psalm, each in its accurate meaning, but almost indifferently one for the other.

ALEPH.

The blessedness of those that keep the law, of whom the Psalmist covets to be one.

1. *in the way*] *i.e.* of life: *in the law*, *i.e.* the revelation delivered on Sinai.

2. *his testimonies*] *i.e.* His commands to do right and to shun wrong: not, as the Rabbins affirm, His precepts in Levit. The Law and the Testimony (see Ps. lxxviii. 5) mean much the same.

3. *They also do no iniquity*, &c.] The blessedness of those who walk in the law: they do—or have done—no wickedness: but walk—or have always walked—in His ways. Throughout the psalm it may be noticed that sometimes the present tense is employed indicating present action: sometimes the perfect to indicate past and present time: see *vv.* 10, 11, 13, 14, 21, 51—61, 101, 102, 131, 145, 147.

5. *directed*] See Prov. iv. 25, "made direct and straight," or perhaps "firmly fixed and placed;" said, properly, of feet firmly placed in the way; next transferred to the way itself.

6. *Then shall I not be*, &c.] *ashamed*, *i.e.* disappointed of my hope which is in Thee, *when*, or, *if*, I look to and note *all Thy commandments* to keep them.

7. *I will praise*, &c.] Cf. 106, 160, 164. "When I am fully instructed in Thy law and in Thy judgments according to it (which all are righteous and true) then shall I praise Thee adequately with heart attuned to Thy service." The word rendered *judgments* means, as in Ps. xix. 9, judgments by word of mouth, decrees, laws, issuing in acts: see Exod. xxi. 1.

8. *O forsake*, &c.] "O forsake me not *utterly* or **very far**, lest of my unassisted strength, in dire extremity, I be unable to keep them."

BETH.

The security of those, especially of the young, who keep the law.

9. *Wherewithal*, &c.] A young man is mentioned, as in Ps. xxxiv. 11, on account of youth's temptations: some think on account

10 With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.

11 Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

12 Blessed *art* thou, O LORD: teach me thy statutes.

13 With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth.

14 I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as *much as* in all riches.

15 I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways.

16 I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word.

ג GIMEL.

17 Deal bountifully with thy servant, *that* I may live, and keep thy word.

18 †Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. † Heb. *Reveal.*

19 [a]I *am* a stranger in the earth: hide not thy commandments from me. [a] Gen. 47. 9. 1 Chron. 29. 15. Ps. 39. 12. Hebr. 11. 13.

20 My soul breaketh for the longing *that it hath* unto thy judgments at all times.

21 Thou hast rebuked the proud *that are* cursed, which do err from thy commandments.

22 Remove from me reproach and contempt; for I have kept thy testimonies.

23 Princes also did sit *and* speak against me: *but* thy servant did meditate in thy statutes.

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of the youth of the Psalmist, see 99, 100; but the Ps. is scarcely the utterance of youth. *Thy word*, *i.e.* "Thy commandments." The second versicle gives the answer to the first.

11. *Thy word*, &c.] "As treasure safely stored away in secret repository I lay by in my heart Thy word:" see Luke ii. 51; Ps. xviii. 30: or, "I keep Thy word close to my heart and obey it: not as an outward law, but as a guide ever at hand."

13. *With my lips*, &c.] "With my lips, according to the command (Deut. vi. 7), I have recounted, again and again, to all near me, the judgments that Thy mouth delivered of old."

14. *thy testimonies*] *i.e.* "Thy commands, or the declarations of Thy will generally in the Law;" see *vv.* 2, 22, &c.

15. *meditate*, &c.] See *vv.* 23, 27, 48, 78, and Ps. civ. 34; Gen. xxiv. 63. The idea seems to be that of "singing," or "speaking of:" Virg. 'Ecl.' i. 2. *Thy ways*, *i.e.* "The paths of life marked out in Thy law," Ps. xxv. 4.

16. *I will delight*, &c.] The present here, and in *v.* 15, is more emphatic: "I meditate (all the day long) in Thy precepts: my delight is in Thy statutes: I cease not, at any time, to think and talk of Thy word."

GIMEL.

17. *Deal bountifully*, &c.] "Of Thy bountiful goodness grant to Thy servant that I may live: so shall I keep Thy law." He prays for life, in the midst of peril, see *v.* 87, &c., and promises to spend it according to God's law.

18. *Open thou*, &c.] "Open Thou mine eyes to discern the wondrous things in Thy law; hidden, it may be, under the letter, and concealed, except from those whose eyes are opened of God."

19. *I am a stranger*, &c.] See *v* 54. Man is a stranger in the earth (see the marg. and Gen. xvii. 8, xxiii. 4); far from his home, and ignorant of the way to please God: the word of God is his only solace and protection: and for this the Psalmist prays (*v.* 20) with a *longing* which even *breaks*, or crushes, his soul!

21. *Thou hast rebuked*, &c.] "Thou hast rebuked, *i.e.* chastised and restrained (Ps. ix. 5, lxviii. 30, cvi. 9) the proud (see Ps. xix. 13, Heb.), *i.e.* the rebellious and impious, who are accursed, (see Deut. xxvii. 26), because of Thy reproof; and do err from Thy commandments."

22. *Remove from me*, &c.] "Defend me, as I keep Thy commandments, from the reproach and scorn of my foes, who are also Thy foes!" De Wette, Kay, and others, compare Josh. v. 9, and render "Roll away, &c." But the idea is rather that of removing a veil or covering: supra, v. 18, (Heb.); Isai. xxii. 8, xlvii. 2; Nah. iii. 5.

23. *Princes also*, &c.] "Princes too **do sit** in council, and **speak against me**, (see Ezek. xxxiii. 30; Dan. vi. 4); but Thy servant **is meditating** upon Thy law: yea, Thy Testimonies (*v.* 24) are so delightful a meditation, that he cares not for the machinations of his foes: nor ever does, nor imagines, any evil thing, to give occasion against him."

24 Thy testimonies also *are* my delight *and* †my counsellers.

† Heb. *men of my counsel.*

ד DALETH.

25 My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken thou me according to thy word.

26 I have declared my ways, and thou heardest me: [b]teach me thy statutes.

[b] Ps. 25. 4. & 27. 11. & 86. 11.

27 Make me to understand the way of thy precepts: so shall I talk of thy wondrous works.

28 My soul †melteth for heaviness: strengthen thou me according unto thy word.

† Heb. *droppeth.*

29 Remove from me the way of lying: and grant me thy law graciously.

30 I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid *before me.*

31 I have stuck unto thy testimonies: O LORD, put me not to shame.

32 I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.

ה HE.

33 Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it *unto* the end.

34 Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with *my* whole heart.

35 Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight.

36 Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.

37 †Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; *and* quicken thou me in thy way.

† Heb. *Make to pass.*

38 Stablish thy word unto thy servant, who *is devoted* to thy fear.

DALETH.

25. *My soul*, &c.] "My soul (Heb. life) is brought low, even to the dust (Ps. vii. 5, xliv. 25), O quicken, *i.e.* restore to vigorous life (Ps. lxxi. 20, lxxxv. 6), according to Thy promise:" compare *vv.* 37, 40, 50, 88, 93, 107, 144, 149, &c.: also *vv.* 9, 28, 38, 42, 65, 116, 169, &c. The quickening prayed for is not of the spirit, but of the body, depressed to the lowest estate by suffering and sorrow.

26. *I have declared*, &c. "I have put before Thee—I do daily put before Thee—*i.e.* in prayer and supplication—my way of life (Ps. xxxvii. 5), its perils, temptations, endeavours, and Thou hast heard and approved my tale: O teach me Thy statutes, that so it may ever be." The second versicle occurs *vv.* 12, 64, 68, 108, 124; and Ps. xxv. 4.

27. *Make me to understand*, &c.] See *v.* 18.

28. *My soul melteth*, &c.] See *v.* 25. "My soul, so to say, is dissolved in tears (Job xvi. 20), through heaviness: strengthen Thou me, or raise me up out of my fallen estate, according to Thy word."

29. *Remove*, &c.] "*the way of lying, i.e.* of false religion, the opposite of Thy law (see *vv.* 30, 104, 128, 168): and *grant me*, as a gracious gift, *Thy law*, its knowledge and practice." Jerome renders "Legem tuam dona mihi."

30. *I have chosen*, &c.] "I have chosen (and now choose) the way of true religion: Thy judgments and laws I have put, and do put always, before mine eyes (Ps. xvi. 8), as rules to be ever observed."

31. *I have stuck*, &c.] The same word, in the original, as in *v.* 25: "I have striven always, and do strive, *to adhere stedfastly* to Thy testimonies: O succour me lest I depart from them and be put to open shame."

32. *I will run*, &c.] "I will run joyfully in the way of Thy commandments when Thou shalt enlarge my heart (Isai. lx. 5; 2 Cor. vi. 11, 13), to serve Thee perfectly." A heart confined, constrained, and sad, seems contrasted, in the latter clause, with a heart free to expand, unconstrained, and joyous. It is possible, however (De Wette, &c.), that enlargement of heart (see 1 K. iv. 29) may mean *understanding to comprehend God's commandments* thoroughly.

HE.

33. *unto the end*] *i.e.* "of life;" see 112. Cf. Matt. xxiv. 13.

36. *covetousness*] Or "robbery." See 1 Sam. viii. 3. The word may be put for any irregular lust: or it may have been a special temptation, at the time of the composition of this psalm, to those who apostatized from God. See Jer. vi. 13, viii. 10; Prov. i. 19.

37. *Turn away*, &c.] "Aid me to turn aside (Isai. xxxiii. 15; Job xxxi. 26, 27) from aught that solicits to ungodliness in act or belief: and quicken me in the knowledge and practice of Thy law."

38. *Stablish*, &c.] "Confirm and realize

39 Turn away my reproach which I fear: for thy judgments *are* good.

40 Behold, I have longed after thy precepts: quicken me in thy righteousness.

ו VAU.

41 Let thy mercies come also unto me, O LORD, *even* thy salvation, according to thy word.

42 [1]So shall I have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me: for I trust in thy word.

43 And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in thy judgments.

44 So shall I keep thy law continually for ever and ever.

45 And I will walk [1]at liberty: for I seek thy precepts.

46 I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed.

47 And I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved.

48 My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes.

ז ZAIN.

49 Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.

50 This *is* my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me.

51 The proud have had me greatly

[1] Or, *So shall I answer him that reproveth me in a thing.*

[1] Heb. *at large.*

Thy promise (of aid and support) to Thy servant who is devoted *to Thy fear, i.e.* to Thy reverential service:" so the Syr.—Or, "confirm and strengthen to Thy servant *Thy promise* which (*i.e.* promise) *is attached to the fear of Thee:*" see Pss. xxv. 10, cxii. 1, cxxviii. 1: or, rather, "confirm &c. *Thy promise* which (*i.e.* promise) *issues in Thy fear*, or is accomplished in *the increase of* reverence for Thee:" such seems the import of the Prayer-Book Version. "Stablish Thy word in Thy servant, that I may fear Thee." A reverence or fear is intended which includes love.

39. *Turn away*, &c.] "Guard me from *the reproach which* (alone) *I fear* of sinning against Thee: *for Thy judgments, i.e.* revealed laws, *are good*, and happy is he that keeps them!" Others (De Wette, &c.) explain "Save me from the disgrace which *I fear* and merit for my sins: *for Thy judgments are* merciful:"—a less pointed meaning.

40. *I have longed*, &c.] "*I have longed* for the will to follow *Thy precepts: O quicken me* **according to** *Thy righteousness*, which respects fervent prayer." See Ps. xxxi. 1.

VAU.

42. *So shall I have*, &c.] "So shall I have something (דבר, a "word," or "thing") wherewith to reply to him that upbraideth me, even Thy mercies, shewn to me according to my trust." The marginal rendering gives a sense more pregnant, "So shall I answer him that reproveth me in a thing," or "cause." "Answer" and "cause" seem corresponding phrases borrowed from courts of justice.

43. *And take not*, &c.] "And take not utterly from me the word of truth, that I cannot speak of it: for I have hoped," &c. Others connect the Hebrew words (עַד־מְאֹד) translated "utterly," with the word preceding them. "And take not from me the word of truth, *which is the very truth*, that I cannot speak of it," &c. *The word of truth* is the word of, *experience of*, or, *confession of*, God's truth and faithfulness to promise: and the prayer is for experimental evidence of these attributes of God, to free the heart, and unlock the tongue. The following verses describe the effects of God's favour so entreated.

45. *And I will walk*, &c.] "I shall walk **in a wide way**, *i.e.* free, unconstrained, unoccupied, save by Thy service!" Marg., "at large." *For I seek*, &c., *i.e.* "crave for," "earnestly desire;" as in 94, 155.

46. *I will speak of thy testimonies*, &c.] The motto of the Augsburg Confession of Faith is, "et loquebar de testimoniis tuis in conspectu regum et non confundebar." The verse seems decisively to shew that the author is not a king: it would be appropriate in Ezra or Nehemiah.

48. *My hands also will I lift up*, &c.] As to the sanctuary in which God is, and out of which His power comes, in token of love and longing. See Pss. xxviii. 2, cxxxiv. 2, cxli. 2; also Lam. iii. 41. *Meditate, i.e.* deeply, fondly, eloquently: see *v.* 15, etc.

ZAIN.

49. *Remember*, &c.] "Remember **the promise** made to Thy servant," &c. A special word or promise is perhaps alluded to. See Ps. lvi. 8.

51. *The proud*] *i.e.* "scoffers." See Pss.

in derision: *yet* have I not declined from thy law.

52 I remembered thy judgments of old, O LORD; and have comforted myself.

53 Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake thy law.

54 Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.

55 I have remembered thy name, O LORD, in the night, and have kept thy law.

56 This I had, because I kept thy precepts.

ח CHETH.

57 *Thou art* my portion, O LORD: I have said that I would keep thy words.

58 I intreated thy [1]favour with *my* whole heart: be merciful unto me according to thy word.

59 I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.

60 I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments.

61 The [1]bands of the wicked have robbed me: *but* I have not forgotten thy law.

62 At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee because of thy righteous judgments.

63 I *am* a companion of all *them* that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.

64 The earth, O LORD, is full of thy mercy: teach me thy statutes.

ט TETH.

65 Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according unto thy word.

66 Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments.

[1] Heb. *face.*

[1] Or, *companies.*

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xlii. 3, lxxix. 10, xxii. 8, 9. "*Have had* and still have *me*," &c.: see *v.* 3.

52. *thy judgments*, &c.] See above, *v.* 7. God's laws, *vv.* 50, 51, righteous and true, rewarding the good, and punishing the evil, are still meant: of which the recollection fills the mind of the Psalmist with consolation.

53. *Horror*, &c.] The LXX. render the word [זלעפה] by *ἀθυμία*, "depression:" Arab. and Syr. "sadness:" Jerome "horror:" Calvin "terror:" see Ps. xi. 6, and Note. Probably a burning wind, or simoom, is meant in the place quoted, which scorches up and destroys vegetation in a moment: and, metaphorically, in this place, a sharp, penetrating terror, or horror. A somewhat similar expression is found in Ps. xxxix. See also *v.* 136 of this psalm.

54. *Thy statutes*, &c.] "Thy statutes have been sweet songs, *i.e.* Delightful divertisements to me:" *in the house of my pilgrimage, i.e.* in this earth, in which we are pilgrims (Gen. xlvii. 9; 1 Chro. xxix. 15; *v.* 19 of the Ps.), our home being elsewhere, Eccles. xii. 5.

56. *This I had*, &c.] "Thus much I had and have: this best possession was and is mine;" *because*, or *that*, "I have kept and keep Thy law:"—to others are other blessings assigned. See *v.* 50.

CHETH.

57. *Thou art my portion*, &c.] Heb. "Jehovah (is) my portion," *i.e.* "Mine inheritance, more precious than any other." See Pss. xvi. 5, cxlii. 5; Josh. xvii. 14, xviii. 10. Jehovah was Himself the portion of the house of Levi, Josh. xiii. 33: see also Numb. xviii. 20. There should be a stop after "portion."

I have said, &c.] "I have determined and spoken my determination," &c. Others render "Jehovah is my portion: I have said and say, *so* that I keep Thy words." See Ps. cxl. 6; Isai. xlv. 24.

59. *I thought on my ways*, &c.] "I examined the ways of my life, and do examine, and strive always to direct my steps in the way of Thy testimonies."

61, 62, 63, 64. *The bands*, &c.] See *v.* 110; Ps. xviii. 5. The meaning probably is, "the snares of wicked men surrounded me, but, &c.," *i.e.* In the midst of wicked men, each moment expecting violence and death, my hope is utterly in Thee:—At midnight I rise to praise Thee: I choose for companions only Thy worshippers (cf. Prov. xxviii. 24): Oh, teach me Thy statutes, Thou that fillest the whole earth (Ps. xxxiii. 5) with Thy goodness."

TETH.

65. *Thou hast dealt well*, &c.] "In time past Thy guidance of Thy servant has been according to promise, and wise, and kind."

66. *Teach me*, &c.] "Instruct me in true knowledge to discern the right and the wrong: for I have believed in Thy commandments, the only sources of wisdom and of divine instruction."

67 Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.

68 Thou *art* good, and doest good; teach me thy statutes.

69 The proud have forged a lie against me: *but* I will keep thy precepts with *my* whole heart.

70 Their heart is as fat as grease; *but* I delight in thy law.

71 *It is* good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.

72 [c] The law of thy mouth *is* better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.

[c] Ps. 19. 10. Prov. 8. 11.

י JOD.

73 Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments.

74 They that fear thee will be glad when they see me; because I have hoped in thy word.

75 I know, O LORD, that thy judgments *are* [†] right, and *that* thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.

[†] Heb. *righteousness.*

76 Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be [†] for my comfort, according to thy word unto thy servant.

[†] Heb. *to comfort me.*

77 Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for thy law *is* my delight.

78 Let the proud be ashamed; for they dealt perversely with me without a cause: *but* I will meditate in thy precepts.

79 Let those that fear thee turn unto me, and those that have known thy testimonies.

80 Let my heart be sound in thy statutes; that I be not ashamed.

כ CAPH.

81 My soul fainteth for thy salvation: *but* I hope in thy word.

82 Mine eyes fail for thy word, saying, When wilt thou comfort me?

83 For I am become like a bottle

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67. *Before*, &c.] *Afflicted, i.e.* with chastisement; see 71, 75.

thy word] *i.e.* "Thy Law," 103, 140.

68. *Thou art good*, &c.] "Thou art kind and doest kindness; Oh, teach me Thy statutes that I may merit Thy mercy!"

69. *forged a lie*, &c.] The metaphor may be like the Greek (ῥάπτειν δόλους), from sewing or patching up: or, from smearing, or daubing (Delitzsch, Moll, &c.), a wall, so as to hide the real substance. The Psalmist remains true to God despite the falsehoods with which the proud smear and hide his true fidelity.

70. *Their heart*, &c.] "Their heart is dull and brutal (Isai. vi. 10; Pss. xvii. 10, lxxiii. 7), so that they understand not Thy statutes: in which I delight; yea, and love them with my whole heart; and (*v.* 72) above all price!"

71. *It is good for me*, &c.] Trial at the time is hard to bear (Hebr. xii. 11): but afterwards, it works, through the grace of God, true knowledge.

JOD.

73. *Thy hands*, &c.] "Thy hands have cunningly made me: Oh, leave me not without understanding to know Thy commandments and live!"

74. *They that fear*, &c.] See Pss. xxxiv. 2, xxxv. 27, cvii. 42: "They that fear Thee will rejoice when they see my hope recompensed."

75, 76. *I know, O LORD*, &c.] "That Thy judgments are right, and that Thou hast afflicted me in mercy. But as the suffering is sore let Thy merciful kindness also be with me according to promise." The first of these verses is a treasury of Christian consolation: it should be deeply imprinted—as upon the rock with a pen of steel—in the memory of sufferers always!

78. *dealt perversely with me without a cause*] Or, it may be, "oppress me unjustly without a cause." Shame and discomfiture seem the fitting recompense of the proud; who see, by the providence of God, their plans fail, and prosperity, instead of calamity, result to him whom they persecute. Gen. l. 20.

79. *turn unto me*] *i.e.* "Turn to me and to fellowship with me." Jer. xv. 19; Prov. ix. 4.

80. *sound*] *i.e.* "perfect," or, "undivided in its allegiance." Deut. xviii. 13.

CAPH.

81. *My soul*, &c.] "My soul faints through eager desire for Thy salvation: but my hope is in Thy promise." Ps. lxxxiv. 2. Infr. *vv.* 82 and 123; Ps. lxix. 3, &c.

82. *Mine eyes*, &c.] "As the eyes of him, that watches for one that cometh not, fail with watching, so mine eyes fail me watching evermore for Thy promise"

in the smoke; *yet* do I not forget thy statutes.

84 How many *are* the days of thy servant? when wilt thou execute judgment on them that persecute me?

85 The proud have digged pits for me, which *are* not after thy law.

86 All thy commandments *are* †faithful: they persecute me wrongfully; help thou me.

† Heb. faithfulness.

87 They had almost consumed me upon earth; but I forsook not thy precepts.

88 Quicken me after thy lovingkindness; so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth.

ל LAMED.

89 For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.

90 Thy faithfulness *is* †unto all generations: thou hast established the earth, and it †abideth.

† Heb. to generation and generation.
† Heb. standeth.

91 They continue this day according to thine ordinances: for all *are* thy servants.

92 Unless thy law *had been* my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction.

93 I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me.

94 I *am* thine, save me; for I have sought thy precepts.

95 The wicked have waited for me to destroy me: *but* I will consider thy testimonies.

96 I have seen an end of all perfection: *but* thy commandment *is* exceeding broad.

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83. *For I am become*, &c.] "As wine-skin in the smoke, My heart is sere and dried." Keble. Galen, 'De Med. Simpl.' IV. 14, T. XIII. p. 100 (Ed. Chartr.), says, "Wine in Asia is stored in upper chambers, underneath which large fires are commonly burning. The warmth communicates to it, quickly, properties and excellences, which a long time only could otherwise impart." See also Hor. 'Od.' Lib. III. 8, *vv.* 9, 10: Ovid, 'Fast.' V. 517.

84. *How many*, &c.] "Are they so many as to admit of delay in the manifestation of Thy righteous judgments?"

85. *which are not*, &c.] The proud have digged pits which are not after Thy law, that is, are opposed to and in defiance of Thy law (a similar figure, meiosis, Ezek. xx. 25): see Pss. vii. 15, ix. 15. The pits, which were dug to catch wild animals, are meant. See Ex. xxi. 33; 2 S. xxiii. 20; Jer. xviii. 20, 22.

87. *They had almost*, &c.] "They had almost destroyed and left no trace of me upon the earth, on which my lot and man's lot is cast, but, &c." (see 92 and 109). Others, as De Wette, Vaihinger, &c. interpret differently.

88. *Quicken me*, &c.] See *v.* 107, and above, *v.* 25.

LAMED.

89, 90, 91. *For ever, O LORD*, &c.] The idea is, "The word or promise of God is in heaven—where He is—unchanged: He founded the eternal earth (Ps. civ. 5); His ordinances (Jer. xxxi. 35, 36) rule heaven and earth always: and all things serve Him." The inference is, that His word and ordinances to man are eternal, and ever faithful, see Ps. lxxxix. 2. Others (Hupfeld, &c.) interpret "the word of God (*v.* 89) is settled, in heaven," not, as above explained, "settled in the place where God is," but only by a figure "as in heaven, as in the place which is the image of unchangeableness." The next verse, these say, confirms this view: God's faithfulness is like the earth fixed for ever on its basis, and is to all generations. But the force of the passage is impaired by supposing a comparison that is not expressed; as it is often, *e.g.* Ps. lxxxix. 29, 36, &c. A tacit inference from the bare statement of God's working in heaven and earth, and with the eternal stars, seems eminently expressive.

91. *according to thine ordinances*, &c.] *i.e.* "listening, so to say, to Thy commands; for all are Thy servants."

92. *Unless thy law*, &c.] "If my delight had not been in Thy law, so excellent and eternal, I should have perished long ago in my misery." A verse of price inestimable!

94. *I am thine*, &c.] "Thou art my God, and I Thy servant: save me according to Thy promises and my service!"

96. *I have seen*, &c.] "There is nought which is perfect, or without a limit of duration and extent; but Thy commandments are in duration infinite, and in extent correspond to man's infinite needs." See the description of God Himself in Job xl. 7, &c.

מ MEM.

97 O how love I thy law! it *is* my meditation all the day.

98 Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for † they *are* ever with me.

† Heb. *it is ever with me.*

99 I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies *are* my meditation.

100 I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.

101 I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word.

102 I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught me.

d Ps. 19. 10. † Heb. *palate.*

103 d How sweet are thy words unto my † taste! *yea*, *sweeter* than honey to my mouth!

104 Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.

נ NUN.

† Or. *canale.*

105 Thy word *is* a † lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

106 I have sworn, and I will perform *it*, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.

107 I am afflicted very much: quicken me, O LORD, according unto thy word.

108 Accept, I beseech thee, the freewill offerings of my mouth, O LORD, and teach me thy judgments.

109 My soul *is* continually in my hand: yet do I not forget thy law.

110 The wicked have laid a snare for me: yet I erred not from thy precepts.

111 Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they *are* the rejoicing of my heart.

112 I have inclined mine heart † to perform thy statutes alway, *even unto* the end. † Heb. *to do.*

ס SAMECH.

113 I hate *vain* thoughts: but thy law do I love.

114 Thou *art* my hiding place and my shield: I hope in thy word.

MEM.

97. *O how love I thy law!* &c.] The P. B. V., from the LXX., is, "Lord, what love, &c." In *v.* 99 the same V. omits "all," which is in the Hebrew and LXX.

98. *Thou through thy*, &c.] Or rather, "Thy commandments have made (sing. in Heb.) me wiser than mine enemies; for they (sing. in Heb., see marg.) are ever with me." The Commandments are considered as a Whole and One.

99, 100. *I have more understanding*, &c.] I have more understanding than my teachers, as taught of Thee (see *v.* 24): I understand more than ancients, *i.e.* aged men (Job xxxii. 7), famed for wisdom of the world, because I keep Thy law."

102. *for thou hast taught me*] "Thou, and not man, whose teaching is vain: Thou, whose teaching, as Thyself, is indescribably excellent."

103. *How sweet*, &c.] Cf. Ps. xix. 10. What happiness to have such a treasure and to understand it!

104. *understanding*] *i.e.* more and more continually; to discriminate between truth and falsehood.

every false way] See *v.* 29.

NUN.

105. *a lamp*, &c.] A lamp (so to say) by night: a sun by day: Prov. vi. 23.

108. *Accept*, &c.] "Accept my freewill offerings, of prayer and thanksgiving, coming out of a heart devoted to Thee." A *free-will offering* (Deut. xxiii. 23) was paid to God in gratitude for mercies received, not in obedience to law, or as a confession of sin: see Ps. l. 14, 23. *Offer*, *i.e.* as a sacrifice, *unto God thanksgiving*, &c. *Whoso offereth*, *i.e.* as a sacrifice, *praise*, &c. "This verse," says the Rev. Canon Hawkins, "is a fit petition with which to commence any service of prayer and praise to God."

109. *My soul*, &c.] See Judg. xii. 3; 1 S. xix. 5, xxviii. 21; Job xiii. 14. "Though I am always expecting and ready for death, through my enemies," &c. The image is taken from a traveller *carrying precious jewels in his hand* through dangerous paths: or from soldiers, *who carry their lives in their hands*, in this sense, that their lives depend upon their valour in fight: or, perhaps, from a game of chance, *Though I play with my life and risk it always*, &c. (see 87). Vaihinger interprets "*My soul* is *in* or *upon my hand, apt to fall off and perish*, as anything in or upon the hand easily falls off."

111. *Thy testimonies*, &c.] "I regard Thy testimonies as mine heritage, far more excellent than any other, for ever (*vv.* 33, 44, 98), for they are my chief joy."

SAMECH.

113. *vain thoughts*, &c.] The original

Matth. 7. 115 [e]Depart from me, ye evil-doers: for I will keep the commandments of my God.

116 Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live: and let me not be ashamed of my hope.

117 Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe: and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually.

118 Thou hast trodden down all them that err from thy statutes: for their deceit *is* falsehood.

Heb. *usest to cause.* 119 Thou [†]puttest away all the wicked of the earth *like* dross: therefore I love thy testimonies.

120 My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments.

ע AIN.

121 I have done judgment and justice: leave me not to mine oppressors.

122 Be surety for thy servant for good: let not the proud oppress me.

123 Mine eyes fail for thy salvation, and for the word of thy righteousness.

124 Deal with thy servant according unto thy mercy, and teach me thy statutes.

125 I *am* thy servant; give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies.

126 *It is* time for *thee*, LORD, to work: *for* they have made void thy law.

127 [f]Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold. [f] Ps. 19 10. Prov. 8. 11.

128 Therefore I esteem all *thy*

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word, with a different punctuation, occurs 1 K. xviii. 21, where it is rendered "opinions." The LXX. render it, in this place, "lawless men" (*παρανόμους*); the Syriac, "perversely-minded men;" the Chald., "thinkers of vain thoughts." Geier, in 'Poli Syn.' says, "The Psalmist describes mischievous speculations, subtle, useless, and perilous; heterodox pernicious teachings; opposed to truth revealed, and likely to interfere with its acceptance in its simplicity." The word probably expresses the concrete, and not the abstract: "doubters," "sceptics," "double-minded men." James i. 8, *ἀνὴρ δίψυχος* means "A double-minded man, divided between two opinions."

118. *Thou hast trodden down*, &c.] Or, rather, "Thou hast cast off and made of no account," so the LXX. and Theodotion, "all those that err from Thy statutes: for their teaching, false and treacherous, is a lie; and avails nought against Thee." Symm. *ματαία γὰρ πᾶσα ἡ δολιότης αὐτῶν.*

119. *Thou puttest away*, &c.] "Thou *puttest out of sight*, like useless dross, all the ungodly everywhere in the earth: therefore I love Thy testimonies, which are Thy declarations against ungodliness and wrong." See Jer. vi. 28—30; Ezek. xxii. 18—20; Mal. iii. 2: at first the pure ore and dross are united: but in the process of refining the dross is thrown off. In Exod. xii. 15, the leaven is *put away out* of the houses of the Israelites.

120. *My flesh*, &c.] See Job iv. 15; Isai. ii. 10: Jer. li. 27, the last in the Heb. "My flesh shudders," or "The hair of my flesh stands erect," through fear of Thee and of Thy judgments against wicked men. See Ex. xxxiv. 7.

AIN.

122. *Be surety*, &c.] See Gen. xliii. 9, xliv. 32; Isai. xxxviii. 14; Job xvii. 3. "Be my surety, or defence for good," *i.e.* "that it may be well with me." Deut. vi. 24, x. 13; Ps. lxxxvi. 17; Neh. v. 19.

123. *Mine eyes*, &c.] "Mine eyes fail me in looking for Thy salvation, and for the fulfilment of the promise guaranteed by Thy righteousness." Cf. 81, 82.

125. *I am thy servant*] "And have claim as a servant upon Thy help!"

126. *It is time*, &c.] "It is time for Jehovah to work, *i.e.* to interfere and execute judgment;" Hebr. "to do:" Jer. xviii. 23, *deal thus with them:* Hebr. "do with them:" —or rather, "It is time to work for Jehovah." This rendering is the more obvious and literal. The verse seems appropriate in a time of great falling away from Jehovah.

127, 128. *Therefore*, &c.] Cf. 72. "Because the times are evil; because iniquity abounds: the more they tempt me with gold to leave Thy commandments, the more I love them above fine gold; and not some only, but all Thy precepts, how much so ever opposed to natural will, I esteem perfect."

128. *false way*] See 29, 104, &c. The rendering of the P. B. V., "above gold and precious stone," is probably from the LXX., who translate *ὑπὲρ τὸ χρυσίον καὶ τοπάζιον.*

precepts *concerning* all *things to be* right; *and* I hate every false way.

פ PE.

129 Thy testimonies *are* wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them.

130 The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

131 I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments.

132 Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, † as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name.

† Heb. *according to the custom towards those, &c.*

133 Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.

134 Deliver me from the oppression of man: so will I keep thy precepts.

135 Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; and teach me thy statutes.

136 Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.

צ TZADDI.

137 Righteous *art* thou, O LORD, and upright *are* thy judgments.

† Heb. *righteousness.*

138 Thy testimonies *that* thou hast commanded *are* † righteous and very † faithful.

† Heb. *faithfulness.*

139 ε My zeal hath † consumed me, because mine enemies have forgotten thy words.

ε Psal. 69. John 2. † Heb. *cut me*

PE.

129. *wonderful*] *i. e.* "miraculous, far exceeding aught conceived of man, supplying ever new instructions:" see 18, 27. On account of this incomparable excellence my soul "*keeps*," or rather "marks" and "meditates upon" them always!

130. *The entrance*, &c.] "As a beam of light illumines a dark chamber, Thy word admitted and understood illumines the soul of the simple." But the Hebrew word (פֶּתַח: lit. opening, unfolding, or revelation), for which "entrance" is put in the A.V., is rendered, as would seem rightly, by the LXX. and Vulg. δήλωσις, declaratio, "the declaration;" and the idea intended is, not so much that of the entrance of the word into the soul like light into a chamber; but rather the idea of its revelation to it, and comprehension by it, giving understanding and wisdom. The P.B.V. "when Thy word goeth forth," &c. suggests a wrong idea. The simple (Prov. xxii. 3) want the illumination of God's word.

131. *I opened my mouth*, &c.] A picture, it may be, of eager panting appetite for the heavenly food of God's law. See Ps. lxxxi. 10; Job xxix. 23.

132. *as thou usest to do*, &c.] "As Thy rule is (and was) towards those who love Thy Name." God's rule, of recompensing with good those who truly love Him, is meant. The prayers that follow 133, 134, 135, ask for such recompense.

133. *Order my steps*, &c.] "Order my steps in a right way, according to Thy word (*v.* 101), that I do not wander from it, and be enslaved of evil." Pss. xvii. 5, xix. 13, 14; Heb. xii. 13.

134. *Deliver me*, &c. "Deliver me from the oppression of evil men, that I be not tried above my power, and may keep Thy commandments with my whole heart."

135. *Make thy face*, &c.] Cf. Numb. vi. 25.

136. *Rivers*, &c.] Lam. iii. 48. Lit. "Mine eyes descend in rivers of waters, because men despise Thee and destroy themselves:" see 139; Jer. ix. 18; Philipp. iii. 18. "Most of the Easterns shed tears much more copiously than the people of Europe: I have myself seen Arabs shed tears like streams." 'Wanderings in the East,' Gadsby, Vol. I. p. 226.

TZADDI.

137. *Righteous*, &c.] Bp. Horne refers to the incident related in Gibbon (Vol. IV. p. 298, c. 46) of the Emperor Maurice in his last hours. As his five sons were successively murdered before his face, he had faith to say, "Righteous art Thou, O Lord, and upright are Thy judgments." How many Christians, in palace and cottage, since the days of Maurice, have said the same words, in the midst of trials the same or sharper!

138, 139. *Thy testimonies*, &c.] "The testimonies which Thou hast commanded are righteous (Heb. righteousness), and very faithful (Heb. faithfulness absolute), and counselled for man's extremest good: and my zeal for Thy law, (see Ps. lxix. 9), which men misunderstand and misinterpret, has almost worn me out."

140 Thy word *is* very †pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.

141 I *am* small and despised: *yet* do not I forget thy precepts.

142 Thy righteousness *is* an everlasting righteousness, and thy law *is* the truth.

143 Trouble and anguish have †taken hold on me: *yet* thy commandments *are* my delights.

144 The righteousness of thy testimonies *is* everlasting: give me understanding, and I shall live.

†Heb. *ied, or, fined.*

†Heb. *und me.*

ק KOPH.

145 I cried with *my* whole heart; hear me, O LORD: I will keep thy statutes.

146 I cried unto thee; save me, ‖and I shall keep thy testimonies.

147 I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried: I hoped in thy word.

148 Mine eyes prevent the *night* watches, that I might meditate in thy word.

‖Or, *that may ep.*

149 Hear my voice according unto thy lovingkindness: O LORD, quicken me according to thy judgment.

150 They draw nigh that follow after mischief: they are far from thy law.

151 Thou *art* near, O LORD; and all thy commandments *are* truth.

152 Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever.

ר RESH.

153 Consider mine affliction, and deliver me: for I do not forget thy law.

154 Plead my cause, and deliver me: quicken me according to thy word.

155 Salvation *is* far from the wicked: for they seek not thy statutes.

156 ‖Great *are* thy tender mercies, O LORD: quicken me according to thy judgments.

‖Or, *Many.*

157 Many *are* my persecutors and

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140. *very pure*] *i.e.* "well refined" and "tried" as metals by fire. The P. B. V. is "tried to the uttermost," see Pss. xii. 6, xix. 7, 8.

141. *small*] *i.e.* in estimation and repute, as the following word *despised* intimates; see Judg. vi. 15: or it may possibly mean "young," as the LXX., Vulg., Jer. and others render it. See *vv.* 9, 99, 100.

142. *Thy righteousness*, &c.] The original words expressing righteousness twice in this *v.* are not identical. The import is, "*The righteousness* of God by which He acts in revelation *is an ideal absolute righteousness*, and His law *the truth itself*." So again, *v.* 144, "*The absolute ideal righteousness* of Thy testimonies is for evermore: O grant me understanding of them, and I shall live indeed." This *v.* gives the reason for the devotion described in *v.* 141.

KOPH.

147. *I prevented*, &c.] "I cried unto Thee early, *i.e.* before others (De Wette, &c.), in the gloom, before the dawning of the morning: my fixed hope in Thy promise suffered me not to rest."

148. *Mine eyes*, &c.] "Before the watches (of the night) begin (or end), *i.e.* as one watch of the night ends and another begins, mine eyes make haste and wake always to meditate upon Thy word." See 140, 159. The night in early times was divided into 3 watches: the first, Lam. ii. 19: the second, Judg. vii. 19: the third, Exod. xiv. 24; 1 S. xi. 11.—Mark xiii. 35 (see too Acts xii. 4) seems to imply four, ὀψὲ, μεσονύκτιον, ἀλεκτοροφωνία, πρωΐ. See also Pss. lxiii. 6, xc. 4.

149. *judgment*] *i.e.* "Thy righteous decree:" or, "according to Thy truth and righteousness." The plural is used *v.* 156.

150, 151. *They draw nigh*, &c.] "as in battle array," or, "with hostile intent:" but "Thou art near (Ps. lxix. 18) with ready succour: Thy commandments, whatever Thine enemies may aver, are truth itself; and (*v.* 152) *concerning them*, *i.e.* from intimate experience of them, I say, eternally precious; and whoever trusts in them is *for ever safe*." The divine excellence of Jehovah's statutes assures the Psalmist of their eternal duration. *Nigh* in the first versicle is opposed to *far* in the second. See Matt. v. 18; Luke xxi. 33.

RESH.

154. *Plead my cause*, &c.] See note on Ps. xxxv. 1: also Pss. xliii. 1, lxxiv. 22.

155. *Salvation is far*, &c.] God forces not upon any His salvation: if it be far from any one—he alone is to blame.

157. *Many*, &c.] See Ps. iii. 1, 2, 3.

mine enemies; *yet* do I not decline from thy testimonies.

158 I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word.

159 Consider how I love thy precepts: quicken me, O LORD, according to thy lovingkindness.

160 † Thy word *is* true *from* the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments *endureth* for ever.

† Heb. *The beginning of thy word is true.*

שׁ SCHIN.

161 Princes have persecuted me without a cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word.

162 I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.

163 I hate and abhor lying: *but* thy law do I love.

164 Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments.

165 Great peace have they which love thy law: and † nothing shall offend them.

† Heb. *they shall have no stumbling-block.*

166 LORD, I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments.

167 My soul hath kept thy testimonies; and I love them exceedingly.

168 I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies: for all my ways *are* before thee.

ת TAU.

169 Let my cry come near before thee, O LORD: give me understanding according to thy word.

170 Let my supplication come before thee: deliver me according to thy word.

171 My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes.

172 My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments *are* righteousness.

173 Let thine hand help me; for I have chosen thy precepts.

174 I have longed for thy salvation, O LORD; and thy law *is* my delight.

175 Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee; and let thy judgments help me.

176 I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments.

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158. *I beheld*, &c.] "I beheld (and behold) the wicked and treacherous, and was (and am) mightily indignant." Keble renders, "The recreants I survey, And loathing turn away." Apostates from divine truth (see Jer. iii. 20, xii. 1) are meant: compare Ps. cxxxix. 21.

160. *Thy word*, &c.] Or, "The sum (Ps. cxxxix. 17) of Thy word (is) truth, and every one of Thy righteous judgments (is) for ever." The sum total, so to say, and each unit of the sum, of God's commandments is truth and perfection. Delitzsch remarks that, as the psalm draws to an end, its phrase becomes more and more urgently supplicatory. Vaihinger too notices all through the psalm a progress of ideas and sentiment, which is felt but can hardly be expressed. In this section the words *quicken me* are three times repeated, 154, 156, 159.

SCHIN.

161. *but my heart*, &c.] "dreads any violation of Thy law far above the force of Prince or Potentate."

162. *I rejoice*, &c.] "My dread (161) is coupled with joy (111), as of one that findeth spoil." Judg. v. 30; Isai. ix. 3.

164, 165. *Seven times*, &c.] Not only morning and evening, not thrice only (Ps. lv. 17), but seven times, *i.e.* again and again, and many times (Pss. xii. 6, lxxix. 12; Lev. xxvi. 18, 24; Gen. iv. 15; Prov. xxiv. 16), each day so as to hallow the day, the Psalmist thanks God for His word; which is a fountain of peace inexhaustible (*v.* 165), and security against offence or stumbling.

166. *LORD, I have hoped*, &c.] "I have waited anxiously," as Jacob, in Gen. xlix. 18.

168. *I have kept*, &c.] "as of One Who knows all my secret ways, and words, and thoughts:" Ps. cxxxix. 3.

TAU.

169, 170. *give me understanding*, &c.: *deliver me*, &c.] "Give me understanding, more and more, of Thy law, that I may be meet for trial close and pressing: deliver me, as Thou only canst do, according to promise, at fitting time."

173, 174, 175. *Let thine hand*, &c.] "according to Thy promise to Thy servants always (Ps. l. 23): I have desired (and desire) deliverance out of this evil world: aid me by Thy righteous judgments against mine enemies, and I will praise Thee more and more."

176. *I have gone astray*, &c.] "I have

PSALM CXX.

1 *David prayeth against Doeg,* 3 *reproveth his tongue,* 5 *complaineth of his necessary conversation with the wicked.*

A Song of degrees.

IN my distress I cried unto the LORD, and he heard me.

2 Deliver my soul, O LORD, from lying lips, *and* from a deceitful tongue.

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wandered far from Thee and from home, as a sheep lost and ready to perish in a wilderness. Seek Thy servant lest he be not able of himself to seek Thee: bring him again to Thy fold, for his heart is Thine and he is longing to hear Thy voice." See Isai. liii. 6; Jer. l. 6; John x. 14—16. As *vv.* 67, 110 plainly describe the spiritual inner state of the Psalmist, Vaihinger supposes this verse to refer to the outward circumstances of his life.

PSALMS OF DEGREES.

Some imagine these fifteen Psalms of Degrees, Pss. cxx.—cxxxiv., to have been chanted by pilgrims returning from exile at Babylon. But the title would rather be Psalms of Ascent (one), than of Ascents (many): scarcely any psalm of the collection has a natural connection with the subject of a return from exile, and some are irreconcileable with it. The inscriptions, too, which assign some of the psalms to David, and one to Solomon, form an argument of weight against this opinion. Others (Ewald, Thenius, &c.) suppose the psalms written at various periods for pilgrims making the periodical journeys with song and music (Isai. xxx. 29; cf. Gen. xxxi. 27) to Jerusalem, commanded by the law, Deut. xvi. 16. This is the opinion of Aq., Symm., and Theod., who render the title respectively "a song for the goings up" (ᾆσμα εἰς τὰς ἀναβάσεις), and "a song of the goings up" (ᾆσμα τῶν ἀναβάσεων). It is the opinion generally received; and Pss. cxxi. cxxii., and some others, fall in with it naturally: it is supported too by the indisputable use of the Hebrew word from which the title "Psalm of Degrees" (or ascents) is derived (Ex. xxxiv. 24; 1 K. xii. 27; Ps. cxxii. 4), in the sense required by the explanation. But the contents of many of the psalms, as cxxiv. cxxv. cxxvi., are scarcely reconcileable with it: and generally there is little in any one of them to suggest such an explanation. The journeys or ascents of pilgrims to Jerusalem are scarcely alluded to in Scripture (see 1 S. i. 3; Luke ii. 42; John vii. 8); and a collection of psalms for use in them could scarcely, without other explanation, be so designated. Early tradition says that the psalms were written for chanting upon the fifteen steps which led from the court of the women in the temple to the court of the men of Israel. So Luther, Grotius, &c., after the LXX. (ᾠδὴ τῶν ἀναβαθμῶν), and Vulg. (Canticum Graduum). But the steps supposed to be referred to are not mentioned in Scripture. Gesenius's opinion, see his 'Thesaurus' (in v. מַעֲלָה), is, that the characteristic of these psalms is a peculiar mode of repeating a significant phrase. A word employed at the end of a verse is repeated and intensified, so to say, in the next; as in Ps. cxxi. 1, 2, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help; my help cometh from the Lord," &c. But this theory is applicable only by a kind of forcing to some of the psalms, as to cxxviii. cxxix. cxxx. cxxxi. Thrupp, Vol. II. p. 264, suggests that they were composed for the encouragement of the workmen engaged in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem under Nehemiah; but it is doubtful if the title "Song of Ascents," without addition, could signify a song of ascents *to the walls.*

The psalms seem written, or put into their present form, after the exile, to which as of recent occurrence there are many allusions. Above it was remarked that Pss. xc.—c., ci.—cvii., cviii.—cxviii., are collections of psalms, in some respects like this collection, for special occasions and uses.

We may notice the following characteristics of nearly all these psalms: sweetness and tenderness; a sad pathetic tone; brevity; an absence generally of the ordinary parallelism; and something of a quick trochaic rhythm.

PSALM CXX.

The opposition of the Samaritans, or of the Moabites, Ammonites, and other near tribes, who set themselves against the rebuilding of the temple and re-establishment of the people at Jerusalem, seems to many commentators to have given occasion to this psalm. See Ezra iii. iv. &c.; Neh. ii. iv. vi. &c. But it carries on the face of it the notion of individual, hardly bearable, trial, more than that of national distress, and a people's cry to God. The trial is like that of David, 1 S. xxi. 7, xxii. 9, &c. (mentioned in the contents of the A.V.), and is inflicted by a slanderous tongue: it is soothed by the recollection that God hears the cry of the suppliant, and answers it always.

1. *In my distress,* &c.] The Psalmist recollects earlier instances of Jehovah's answer to a cry of distress: or the past tense includes

3 [1]What shall be given unto thee? or what shall be [2]done unto thee, thou false tongue?

4 [1]Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper.

5 Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, *that* I dwell in the tents of Kedar!

6 My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace.

7 I *am* [1]*for* peace: but when I speak, they *are* for war.

[1] Or. *What shall* the deceitful tongue *give unto thee? or, What shall it profit thee?*

[2] Heb. *added.*

[1] Or, It is as *the sharp arrows of the mighty* man, *with coals of juniper.*

[1] Or, a man *of peace.*

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the present; and the import is, "In my distress I cried and do now cry, and He heard me and now hears or will hear me;" *v.* 2 contains the cry or prayer: *vv.* 3, 4, the hint that God hears.

3, 4. *What shall be given*, &c.] The A.V. may be thus paraphrased, "What punishment shall be assigned to thee, or what shall be done or added unto thee, *thou false tongue*, in recompense for misery caused?" or, the rendering may be, "What shall (God) give unto thee, and what shall (He) add unto thee?"—Answer; "Sharp arrows (Ps. xlv. 5), wielded by a mighty one" (see Ps. cxxvii. 4; Jer. l. 9), "and burning coals of juniper;" see Ps. cxl. 10; Prov. xxv. 22. Thus the punishment of the slanderous tongue is appropriate: for itself is *a sharp sword;* Ps. lvii. 4; "a pointed arrow," Jer. ix. 8; "and it burns like hell-fire," James iii. 6. The root of the retem or broom (in the A.V. *juniper*) is used for fire in the desert, and retains its heat, says Jerome, who lived in Palestine, for a year. See Burckhardt, 'Travels,' Vol. II. p. 791; Robinson's 'Palestine,' Vol. I. p. 299. The same shrub is mentioned, 1 K. xix. 4; Job xxx. 4.

A difference of opinion, it may be noticed, exists respecting the interpretation of almost every verse and word of this psalm.

5. *Woe is me, that*, &c.] Mesech (see Note below) is between the Black Sea and the Caspian, Kedar is in Arabia. They stand here for remote barbarous hordes. Similarly, we should speak (De Wette) of a dwelling with Turks and Hottentots.

7. *I am for peace*, &c.] Heb. "I (am) peace." Ps. cix. 4 (Heb.), "I (am) prayer." Reuss remarks that the conclusion of the psalm is abrupt, and leaves the reader in ignorance of the issue of the trial, which had lasted, *v.* 6, "too long," or "very long." But the strong faith expressed in *v.* 1 casts its ray of comfort to the end.

NOTE on PSALM CXX. 5.

Mesech is the name of one of the sons of Japheth, Gen. x. 2: the people, Mesech, are mentioned in connection with Javan, Tubal, &c., as trading with Tyre in slaves and brass, Ezek. xxvii. 13; and again (Ezek. xxxii. 26), in connection with Asshur, Edom, Elam, as hurled into the pit for the woe which they had caused upon the earth: again (Ezek. xxxviii. 2), in connection with Gog and Magog, the northern peoples (xxxviii. 15), Mesech is threatened with destruction if he comes down as a cloud (xxxviii. 9, 16) upon Israel. These traits point to a northern barbarous tribe: and the common opinion is that Mesech is the people whom the Greeks and Romans call Moschi, Herod. III. 94. These lived upon the mountain-ranges south of, and adjoining, Caucasus and the south-east borders of the Black Sea. The ranges of Caucasus are rich in veins of brass (Bochart, 'Geogr.' pp. 207, 208), and the adjoining countries, Georgia and Circassia, always have been infamous for slave-traffic. Kedar is the name of one of the sons of Ishmael, Gen. xxv. 13: the flocks of *Kedar* and rams of *Nebaioth* are mentioned in connection, Isai. lx. 7. The sons of Kedar dwelt in dark tents, S. of S. i. 5, as the Bedouin of the present day; under princes or chiefs, Ezek. xxviii 21: were a warlike people and skilled in archery, Isai. xxi. 15. Nebaioth can hardly be other than the tribe of the Nabathæans, who gave their name to a large part of Arabia, Joseph. 'Ant.' B. I. ch. 12, § 4, and dwelt, according to Pliny and Strabo, in Arabia Petræa. They are mentioned in 1 Macc. v. 25. All the traits of Kedar correspond with those of an Arabian tribe; its exact locality is not known. See the 'Dict. of Bible,' in vv. *Mesech* and *Kedar:* or Rosenm. 'Geog.' Vol. I. Pt. i. p. 248, and Vol. III. p. 27.

PSALM CXXI.

The great safety of the godly, who put their trust in God's protection.

A Song of degrees.

I WILL lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

2 [a] My help *cometh* from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.

3 He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.

4 Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

5 The LORD *is* thy keeper: the LORD *is* thy shade upon thy right hand.

6 The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.

7 The LORD shall preserve thee

[1] Or, *Shall I lift up mine eyes to the hills? whence should my help come?*

[a] Ps. 124. 8.

PSALM CXXI.

It is possible (p. 455) that this psalm may have been chanted by pilgrims at the first sight of the mountains of Judea, or at the conclusion of one of the periodical journeys to Jerusalem. But we know of no circumstances attending those pilgrimages which should call forth such strong expressions of fear and of confidence. The intensity of faith and of need, which the psalm exhibits, more naturally suggests some occasion on which an individual, suffering acute trial, appeals to God with an absolute trust in His protection.

Steps or *ascents* of idea, see p. 455, in the psalm are manifest. "Whence cometh my help? It comes from Jehovah! from the Maker of heaven and earth." "He will not suffer thy foot to slip. He that keepeth thee will not slumber. He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps," &c.

The change of persons in *vv.* 1, 2, 3 and 4, suggests the notion of two speakers: the first, the Psalmist, in *vv.* 1, 2, propounding his difficulty and hope: the second, in *vv.* 3, 4, &c., dilating upon the latter topic, and appealing to experience in proof of God's care of His people; since first He declared Himself Israel's Keeper, Gen. xxviii. 15, and the eternal Guardian of His chosen, Deut. xxxii. 10. But rather, the first two verses contain the half-doubting, half-confident sentiment of the Psalmist: and the following verses to the end, the assurance given to him by the Spirit of God strengthening his wavering faith. The word "keep" is repeated eight times in the last seven verses of this psalm. In *v.* 7, the A.V. substitutes *preserve* for "keep."

1. *I will lift up*, &c.] There is a question, as in the marg.; "I lift up mine eyes to the hills (or mountains), asking, Whence cometh my help?" The allusion may be to Isai. lii. 7: see also Nahum i. 15: the Psalmist turns his eyes, some say, towards the distant mountains bounding his horizon, to see if any messenger appears upon them bringing tidings of deliverance: in support of the allusion to Isaiah it may be urged that *v.* 4 contains a manifest reference to Isai. v. 27. But rather the mountains round about Jerusalem, in the midst of which Jehovah dwells, and from whence comes His blessing, are intended. See Pss. iii. 4, xiv. 7, lxxxvii. 1, cxxv. 2, cxxxiii. 3, &c. The Psalmist, in exile it may be, turns towards these distant mountains of his beloved country, hoping for aid.

2. *My help*, &c.] It comes from Jehovah Who made heaven and earth, and, unlike vain idols, is omnipotent to save: see Pss. cxv. 15, cxxiv. 8, &c.

3. *He will not suffer*, &c.] The expression seems less confident than an absolute assertion. "He will not" (be sure) "suffer thy foot to be moved (*i.e.* to slip): He that keepeth thee will not" (be sure) "slumber:" then, in *v.* 4, absolutely, "He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps:" *Behold*, *i.e.* "the truth undoubted," that Jehovah sleeps not, &c.: "slumber" and "sleep" are not contrasted; the phrase is stronger than if one word only were used.

4. *Israel*] Emphatic.

5. *The LORD is*, &c.] Shade, in a burning climate, is a word so naturally equivalent to defence, that it seems here to be put simply for it. See Num. xiv. 9, *their defence* (Heb. shade) *is departed from them:* Ps. xci. 1. So the words are equivalent to "the Lord is thy defence at thy right hand," as in P. B. V. A guardian attendant is posted at the right hand: see Pss. xvi. 8, lxxiii. 23, cix. 31, cx. 5. In Ps. cix. 6, Satan, *the adversary*, is imaged in this proper place of protector. See the note there.

6. *The sun shall not smite thee*, &c.] A stroke from the sun's rays is fatal, 2 K. iv. 18, 19. See too Jonah iv. 8; Judith viii. 2, 3. There is no difficulty in supposing that the noxious effect of the moon's rays, now generally believed, should have been alluded to in this place. It is contrary to the genius of Scripture to say that the moon is introduced here simply on account of a parallelism (Hupfeld) or attraction, and, as in Josh. x. 12, 13; Isai. xxiv. 23; Ps. lxxii. 5, &c., to supplement the mention of the sun. In all those places the mention of the moon is introduced with definite intent:

from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.

8 The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.

PSALM CXXII.

1 David professeth his joy for the church, 6 and prayeth for the peace thereof.

A Song of degrees of David.

I WAS glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD.

2 Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.

3 Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together:

4 Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, unto the testi-

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but in this place, unless it were understood to exercise a harmful power like that of the sun, without any propriety. For the proof of a noxious influence exerted by the moon, see Leopolt, 'India Missions,' p. 7; Curzon's 'Travels,' p. 36; Rosenm. 'Altes und Neues Morg.' IV. p. 108, and other authorities in Delitzsch.

8. *thy going out and thy coming in*] The original of the phrase seems to occur Deut. xxviii. 6. See 1 S. xxix. 6; 2 S. iii. 25; 1 K. iii. 7; Acts i. 21, for similar uses of it. The import is, "thy daily life."

PSALM CXXII.

The psalm is not attributed to David by the LXX., nor by the Vulg., Syr., Chald. versions: the words "of" or "by David" are also omitted in some Hebrew MSS. The Psalmist is one of a company of pilgrims; and recounts, *v.* 1, his delight at the proposal of a joint visit to Jerusalem and God's house; *v.* 2, his wonder and admiration at the first glimpse of the holy city closely compact and one; *v.* 4, his recollections of the glories of the kingdom of which Jerusalem is the centre; the journeys of the tribes, the thrones in it for judgment of David's house, &c. He adds a prayer, *v.* 6, for the happiness and peace of this centre of union and brotherhood; on account of brethren and friends, *v.* 8, inhabiting it; on account of the house of God, *v.* 9, standing in it.

The contents of the psalm do not bespeak David as its author. The first and ninth verses lose all interest if the Temple of Jehovah be not standing. The burst of wonder at first sight of the city seems unsuitable to David the king. The mention of the *house of David*, *v.* 5, and the prayer for the *peace of Jerusalem*, *v.* 7, its *walls and palaces*, seem to necessitate a later date. On the other hand, a date after the exile seems inconsistent with the address, *v.* 3, to Jerusalem in its "beauty and compactness;" with the thrones, *v.* 5, of David's house still standing; with the description of the prosperous city, *v.* 7; and with the prayer, *v.* 9, for the *house* of God. Those who adopt this view consider all the tenses in *vv.* 4, 5 as *past*, and descriptive of the ancient glories of David's kingdom; and so give up a principal beauty of the psalm: and they escape the argument derived from the address in *v.* 3, by rendering the words, "O Jerusalem that art *rebuilt* as a city," &c., introducing an idea anomalous, unpoetical, and somewhat inconsistent with the description of the city in *v.* 7. No theory of the date of the psalm is free from objections: the tenses (in the original), specially in *vv.* 4, 5, already referred to, on any supposition, occasion obscurity. But there is good authority (Rosenm., &c.) for rendering them as in our version.

2. *Our feet shall stand*, &c.] Heb. "Our feet stood or stand (or, have become standing, are still standing) within thy gates, O Jerusalem." "We stand, we pause, at the entrance of thy gates;"—at the scene, that is, of the exclamation and memories, *v.* 4, which follow.

3. *Jerusalem is builded*, &c.] Rather, "O Jerusalem, built up, or well built, as a city compact in unity." Symm. *συνάφειαν ἔχουσαν ὁμοῦ*: LXX. *οἰκοδομουμένη ὡς πόλις ἧς ἡ μετοχὴ αὐτῆς ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό*. Dean Stanley, 'S. and P.' p. 172, explains how expressive this description is of the actual city of Jerusalem; and much more, in all likelihood, of the old city shut in close by deep ravines, rising aloft above them, and separate from all around it, and *compact and one*. Thomson, 'Land and Book,' p. 627, illustrates further the expression of the psalm: "The rocky regions lying in between these valleys is the platform of the ancient Jerusalem—the whole of it. Within their limits there was nothing else, and beyond them the city never extended. Thus I understand the language of Josephus when he is speaking of Jerusalem, *one and entire*." The words of the orig. will bear various meanings.

4. *Whither the tribes go up*, &c.] If the date of the psalm be, as seems nearly certain, after David and Solomon, the *tribes* must be, not the undivided tribes, but such portions of them, out of all lands, as still observed the law of Moses; Exod. xxiii. 17; Deut. xii. 4, 5, xvi. 16. See too 1 K. xii. 27. Mary and Joseph, Luke ii. 41, 42, went up to Jerusalem in obedience to this law. The words

mony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the LORD.

† Heb. *do sit.*

5 For there †are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David.

6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.

7 Peace be within thy walls, *and* prosperity within thy palaces.

8 For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace *be* within thee.

9 Because of the house of the LORD our God I will seek thy good.

PSALM CXXIII.

1 *The godly profess their confidence in God,* 3 *and pray to be delivered from contempt.*

A Song of degrees.

UNTO thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens.

2 Behold, as the eyes of servants *look* unto the hand of their masters, *and* as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes *wait* upon the LORD our God, until that he have mercy upon us.

3 Have mercy upon us, O LORD,

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unto the testimony of Israel should rather be rendered "a testimony to Israel," *i.e.* a custom or law to Israel: or, a testimony to Israel's covenant.

5. *For there are set*, &c.] Such thrones *e.g.* as David sat upon, 2 S. xv. 2, and Solomon, 1 K. iii. 16, vii. 7. In Dean Stanley's 'Jewish Church,' Vol. II. p. 195, the original gorgeous throne of Solomon is described. The reason is given why the tribes flock to Jerusalem: see Deut. xvii. 9. The capital of the nation was also, by divine appointment, the centre of religious worship.

6. *Pray for the peace*, &c.] "Pray for the peace, *i.e.* prosperity, of the Holy City rising beautifully in sight. May all that love thee be prosperous." The latter clause of the verse is part of the wish or prayer which goes on in *v.* 7, *Peace be within thy walls*, &c. The alliteration and play upon the words peace, Jerusalem, prosperity, cannot be preserved.

9. *I will seek thy good*] *i.e.* on all these accounts, brethren, friends, the house of God, and for no selfish ends, Jer. xxix. 7, "I will strive for thy good in prayer."

PSALM CXXIII.

An Israelite suffering, in common with his people, *v.* 2, sharpest affliction and scorn, and despairing of aid from man, prays for succour; with an absolute confidence in Jehovah, to Whom he looks for mercy, as servants look to their lord, or maiden to her mistress. Hengsten. and others suggest the circumstances narrated Neh. ii. 19, and iv. 1—4, as suitable to the composition of this psalm; and the words used in *v.* 4, *Hear, O our God, for we are despised*, certainly recal *v.* 3 of the psalm. Lyra suggests, in preference, the times of persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes. The first emergency seems almost too slight to have inspired such deep passion of sorrow and humiliation as the psalm discovers. Antiochus' persecution would have suggested images of violence, wrong, and savage murder, rather than of scorn and contempt. The expression *the LORD our God*, or "Jehovah our God," common to this psalm, *v.* 2, and to the last, *v.* 9, seems to shew some connection between them; and the peculiar use of the Hebrew expletive in *v.* 4, which the A.V. does not express, recalls the similar use of it in Ps. cxx. 6, and also suggests a common authorship. The psalm exemplifies the idea of a Psalm of Degrees noticed in p. 455. The play upon the word *eyes* in *vv.* 1, 2, and reiteration of phrases in *vv.* 3, 4, *Have mercy upon us*, &c., cannot be accidental. The deep pathos and intensity of faith and of supplication in it shew it to have been written in a time of actual pressing trial: of what kind we cannot say, but of long continuance, even to the uttermost wearying, *vv.* 3, 4.

2. *Behold, as the eyes*, &c.] Why to the *hand* of master or mistress? Hengsten. supposes the image to be that of slaves enduring chastisement at the hand of master or mistress, and watching it to see if any mitigation of punishment is soon to come; in direct allusion to Sarah's chastisement of Hagar, Gen. xvi. 6. But the idea of harsh chastisement thus introduced is unsuitable to the spirit of the beautiful psalm. As slaves watch the hand of master or mistress to comprehend their lightest wish, and execute it with promptitude, so suffering Israel looks to Jehovah, to discern His pleasure, to acquiesce implicitly in His will, and, at the last, to obtain mercy. The eye rather than the hand should be watched, according to Terence, 'Adelphi,' II. i. 16, "cave oculos a meis oculis quoquam dimoveas;" but it is perfectly intelligible that the hand should be watched for a sign, as in the places referred to in Burder, 'Oriental Customs,' Vol. I. p. 122. See also Pococke, 'Description of the East,' Vol. I. p. 15.

3, 4. *Have mercy upon us*, &c.] The A.V. does not shew how the expressions used

have mercy upon us: for we are exceedingly filled with contempt.

4 Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, *and* with the contempt of the proud.

PSALM CXXIV.

The church blesseth God for a miraculous deliverance.

A Song of degrees of David.

IF *it had* not *been* the LORD who was on our side, now may Israel say;

2 If *it had* not *been* the LORD who was on our side, when men rose up against us:

3 Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us:

4 Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul:

5 Then the proud waters had gone over our soul.

6 Blessed *be* the LORD, who hath not given us *as* a prey to their teeth.

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in *vv.* 3, 4 continually intensify the idea of suffering introduced: *v.* 3, *We are exceedingly filled with contempt; v.* 4, *Our soul is exceedingly filled*, yea fulfilled, *with the scorn* —the scorn (I say), *of those that are at ease, and with the* bitter *contempt of the proud.* The word denoting *those that are at ease* is used (Isai. xxxii. 9, 11; Amos vi. 1) for "those that are at ease when ease is sin," or "the wanton ones:" the transition from which meaning to that of "proud and arrogant ones" is easy. The word rendered *proud* expresses the before-implied idea of "proud and arrogant ones" directly and strongly. The psalm, it is said, ends abruptly, and leaves the Psalmist (as far as we know) filled even to satiety and weariness *with contempt.* But the strong faith and hope expressed at the commencement (see *v.* 2, *until that he have mercy upon us*) suggest an assurance that help came in time. See Psalm cxx. p. 455.

PSALM CXXIV.

The title ascribes the psalm to David, but the words "of or by David" are omitted in some MSS., in the LXX., Vulg., Syr., and other translations, and in most of the Fathers. "The spirit of the psalm, its confident trust in God, its energy, rapidity and phraseology," says Luther in his comment, "are entirely Davidic." The circumstances of the Edomite war might easily have furnished the occasion for it. But general opinion (Delitzsch, &c.) inclines to a much later author writing after David's manner. Hitzig (of course) refers the psalm to the Maccabees: see 1 Macc. xiii. 20, &c. It paints, with singular vividness, an escape of the community of Israel, by miracle and by Jehovah's single aid, from a terrible peril: in a free, joyous, confident spirit, as of one relieved suddenly from a great pressure: with a multiplicity of images that adds to the reality of the picture, and transports us to the scene of an actual emergency and singular escape. The occasion which gave birth to it is a matter of conjecture; but Jewish story is full of incidents (*e.g.* 2 K. xviii. 13; Isai. xxxvii.: Esth. ix.) of which any one might have suggested it: and life is full of circumstances which draw us to it, as the fitting expression of wonder and thankfulness for miraculous aid, in perils out of which was no escape..

The psalm is an example of a Psalm of Ascents, nearly in the sense described above, p. 455. "They had swallowed us up quick —the waters had overwhelmed us—the stream had gone over our soul," *vv.* 3, 4. "Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare— the snare is broken," &c. Luther's hymn "War Gott nicht mit uns dieser Zeit," &c. is a well-known imitation (to mention only one) of the psalm.

3, 4, 5. *Then they had swallowed*, &c.] *Then*, see Ps. cxix. 92, is not a note of time, but an inference; "If it had not been Jehovah who was on our side, then surely they had swallowed us up quick; then the waters had overwhelmed us; then the proud swelling waters had gone over our soul." *Quick*, *i.e.* alive, as the pit in Num. xvi. 30, 32, 33 swallowed up *quick* Korah, Dathan, &c.: or, as "the grave" swallows up its victims, *whole*, Prov. i. 12: or, as a wild beast devours its prey, almost, so to say, "alive," before the vital spark is out, as Theodoret explains the place:—"We should have perished without sepulture, and been swallowed up alive as men devoured of wild beasts." But the first interpretation seems the best, as the words of the book of Numbers are quoted; and *v.* 6 introduces a new image, of escape from the jaws of a wild beast. *The waters:* see Ps. xviii. 4, 16, for a similar figure of imminent peril, in a psalm allowed by all to be David's: also Ps. cxliv. 7; Isai. viii. 7. *The stream*, Heb. "a stream," *i.e.* a torrent swollen by sudden rains.

4. *our soul*] See Ps. lxix. 1. Not only our bodies, but our head (see Ps. xxxviii. 4), and life: each expression adds force to the preceding.

7 Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped.

[a] Ps. 121. 2. 8 [a] Our help *is* in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

PSALM CXXV.

1 *The safety of such as trust in God.* 4 *A prayer for the godly, and against the wicked.*

A Song of degrees.

THEY that trust in the LORD *shall be* as mount Zion, *which* cannot be removed, *but* abideth for ever.

2 *As* the mountains *are* round about Jerusalem, so the LORD *is* round about his people from henceforth even for ever.

3 For the rod of [†] the wicked shall

[†] Heb *wickedness.*

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5. *Then the proud waters*, &c.] The waters are endowed with life, and painted in the act of overwhelming us. Perowne quotes Æsch. 'P. V.' 717.

7. *broken*] Not by any act of man, but through the help of God, our only help always.

Note the image of a glad bird escaping, unexpectedly and against all hope, from the *broken* net of the fowler. The original words and rhythm have a force which no literal translation can represent: "We escaped as a bird from the snare of the fowler; the snare was broken, and we! we escaped!"

8. *made heaven and earth*] See Pss. cxxi. 2, cxxxiv. 3.

PSALM CXXV.

The circumstances of this psalm are similar to those of Psalm cxxiii. Israel is oppressed by the yoke of tyrants: the trial to faith is sharp: the faithful are daily separating from the traitors. Those who stand fast in their allegiance shall triumph in the end: Jehovah protects His people, as the hills stand round Jerusalem and guard it for evermore.

The events narrated Neh. vi. &c. seem to many to have given occasion to the psalm; and some coincidences of expression (Kay) are noticed between it and the book of Nehemiah; see *v.* 3, and Neh. ii. 8, 18, v. 19, &c. But the Samaritan faction scarcely exercised such a sway over the chosen people as the expressions of *v.* 3 seem to intimate: and, generally, the incidents referred to are tame and commonplace, when contrasted with the outburst in this psalm of passionate energy and faith. Many words in it undoubtedly point to a late date; so Moll, Delitzsch, &c. The repetition of certain words and phrases in it, as of the words *for ever* in *vv.* 1, 2; *round about* in *v.* 2; *righteous* in *v.* 3; *good* in *v.* 4, reminds of the theory of Gesenius.

1. *They that trust in the LORD*, &c.] Or, rather, "They that trust in Jehovah are as Mount Zion; **it shall not be moved: it stands fast for ever**, as the solid earth." Pss. xciii. 1, civ. 5.

2. *As the mountains*, &c.] Literally, "**Jerusalem, mountains** are round about her; and Jehovah is round about His people," &c. See Zech. ii. 4, 5; 2 K. vi. 17. "The Holy City," says Robinson, 'B. R.,' Vol. I. p. 382, "is situated upon a broad and elevated promontory within the fork of the two valleys of Jehoshaphat and Hinnom. All round are higher hills; on the east the mount of Olives; on the south the hill of Evil Counsel rising directly from the vale of Hinnom; on the west the ground rises gently to the borders of the great wady; while on the north a bend of the ridge connected with the Mount of Olives bounds the prospect at the distance of more than a mile; to the south-west the view is somewhat more open." Are the *hills* mentioned in this extract alluded to in the psalm, or the more distant but still near *mountains* Nebi Samuel, El Ram, and Tel el Fulil, and in the further distance the mountains of Moab? Dean Stanley, 'S. and P.,' p. 173, 1st ed., inclines to the latter opinion, and also Thomson, 'L. and B.,' p. 667, ed. 1864. The words of Josephus, 'Bell. Jud.' VI. v. 1, too, quoted by Dean Stanley, favour this idea: *συνέχει δὲ ἥ τε Περαία καὶ τὰ πέριξ ὄρη, κ.τ.λ.* The comparison in the psalm seems to require a closely environing continuous mountain-chain such as that of Olivet, &c.: it requires besides the *manifest appearance* of a guardianship and protection such as the nearest mountains must afford: but still the judgment of two travellers acquainted with the spot can scarcely be set aside.

3. *For the rod*, &c.] The word translated *rod* means rather "sceptre" or "power," as Gen. xlix. 10; Ps. xlv. 6. *The wicked* (Heb. wickedness) are so termed in contrast with "the righteous" or "chosen" people; the *lot of the righteous* is the land of promise portioned out to the tribes, Josh. xviii. 10: "And Joshua cast lots (Heb. a lot) for them in Shiloh," &c.; Ps. xvi. 5. "The power of the oppressors, the enemies of God's people, shall not abide (Isai. xxv. 10, Heb.) upon the land. The trial is to prove faith, not to endanger it by a too sharp pressure: lest, overcome by this, even the faithful put forth a hand (as in

not rest upon the lot of the righteous; lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.

4 Do good, O LORD, unto *those that be* good, and to *them that are* upright in their hearts.

5 As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the LORD shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity: *but* peace *shall be* upon Israel.

PSALM CXXVI.

1 The church, celebrating her incredible return out of captivity, 4 prayeth for, and prophesieth the good success thereof.

A Song of degrees.

WHEN the LORD † turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. † Heb. *returned the returning of Zion.*

2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the hea-

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Gen. iii. 22) to forbidden pleasure: or (as in Exod. xxii. 8), to contamination: through force of custom gradually persuading to sinful compliance, or through despair of good, as the Psalmist (lxxiii. 13, 14: see too Ps. xxxvii.; Num. xiii. 30) describes some in his day who witnessed the prosperity of wicked men."

4, 5. *Do good, O LORD*, &c.] Prayer. "Do Thou, Jehovah, quickly, and before it is too late, *v.* 3, shew mercy to those who are true-hearted and stedfast." Then, *v.* 5, the prayer changes to a prophecy: "All that turn aside from the straight path and wander into by-paths (see Judg. v. 6, *In the days of Shamgar . . . travellers walked through byways*. The word rendered *byways* is the word used in the psalm), that stray from Thee and incline to Thy foes, Jehovah will destroy with the workers of iniquity; or, as workers of iniquity."

The word *shall lead them forth* seems to bear the meaning above expressed, of "leading into the ways of destruction," or "destroying:" see Pss. lviii. 8, cix. 23. A somewhat similar denunciation Matt. vii. 22, xxiv. 51: the wavering, unstedfast, half-hearted disciple shall be as the hypocrite and rebellious.

The concluding words, *peace shall be upon Israel*, should not be connected with what precedes. They are a blessing upon the true Israel: a confident promise of peace and protection at the last, from all oppression and wrong, to those who trust in Jehovah, and are true and upright in heart, *v.* 4; and are secure always like the immovable rock Zion, *v.* 1.

PSALM CXXVI.

A psalm of thanksgiving for return from captivity, *v.* 1, accompanied by an ardent prayer for, *v.* 4, and confident hope of, *vv.* 5, 6, its quick and full completion. The miracle of return was like a dream; it could scarcely be credited for its wonder. It filled the heart of the chosen with joy and thankfulness, and the heathen, who looked on, with astonishment. Yet some only—see the books of Ezra and Nehem., passim—in comparison with its former multitude of inhabitants, as yet occupy the land: the Psalmist, *v.* 4, ardently entreats of God to restore the remainder; and confidently predicts (*vv.* 5, 6) the accomplishment of his prayer; a harvest of joy and rejoicing after a seed-time of sorrow; and prosperous many days, after the short sharp time of trial.

Ps. lxxxv. contains a similar thanksgiving for a restoration from exile, and prayer for its full accomplishment.

The repetition in this psalm of certain words and expressions, *vv.* 1, 4, 2, 3, and 6, which constitute a sort of burden to the song, reminds us faintly of Gesenius' account of Psalms of Degrees, p. 455. See notes upon *vv.* 1, 4, &c.

1. *turned again the captivity*] The phrase so rendered in the A. V. is not identical with that similarly rendered in *v.* 4. But, as above said, the reiteration of principal words and phrases seems a characteristic of these psalms of degrees: and it can scarcely be doubted that originally the two expressions, which now closely resemble each other, were the same. It may be added that it is hard to give any satisfactory account of the Hebrew word שִׁיבַת, which is the received reading (though not in all MSS.), and which is rendered *captivity* in this verse.

The meaning is: When God *turned the captivity*, or changed the captivity of Zion to freedom; when the edict of Cyrus went forth allowing the captives to return, it was so unexpected, it was so miraculous (see the edict in Ezra i.), that we deemed the accomplishment of ancient prophecy (see Jerem. xxv. 12, xxix. 10) a dream. See the remarks below, at *v.* 4.

we were like them that dream] So Polybius describes the joy of the Greeks rescued unexpectedly from the Macedonians: "Most of the men," he says, "could scarcely believe the news, but imagined themselves in a dream as they listened to what was said, so extraordinary and miraculous it seemed to them."

† Heb. *hath magnified to do with them.*

then, The LORD †hath done great things for them.

3 The LORD hath done great things for us; *whereof* we are glad.

4 Turn again our captivity, O LORD, as the streams in the south.

5 They that sow in tears shall reap

‖ Or, *singing.*

in ‖joy.

6 He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing ‖precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves *with him.*

‖ Or, *seed basket.*

PSALM CXXVII.

1 *The virtue of God's blessing.* 3 *Good children are his gift.*

A Song of degrees ‖for Solomon.

‖ Or, *of Solomon.*

B. xviii. ch. 29, § 7. Similarly Livy, B. xxxiii. ch. 22; Quintus Curtius, B. iv. ch. i. 23.

2, 3. *The* LORD *hath done*, &c.] The words of Joel ii. 21 are repeated twice, to call attention to the fulfilment of ancient prophecy.

4. *Turn again*, &c.] A prayer: As the streams in **the dry land** [such is the first import of the word (*negeb*) rendered *the south* —see Josh. xv. 19; Judg. i. 15, Heb.—in our version] are restored in the rainy season, and fill the beds of ancient watercourses, and renew life and movement where silence and desolation were before, so, says the Psalmist, *turn our captivity*, or, *restore the residue*, to fill our streets and cities with inhabitants, and convert a wilderness into a peopled land. The point of comparison is the idea of restoration and renewal, as of waters in a desert land which have disappeared, so of peoples that are wanted and are far away. But others consider the point of comparison to be the idea of gratefulness and welcomeness, as of restored waters, so of returning peoples; and this image may be intended to be conveyed with the other. See Bp. Lowth's note in Meyrick's comment. upon the psalm, p. 243; also Ps. xlii. 1, note.

Many commentators, however (Ewald, Tholuck, Vaihinger, &c.), translate *vv.* 1 and 4 differently; and give a new idea to the image introduced in *v.* 4. Instead of the rendering, *Turn again our captivity*, &c., of *v.* 4, they translate "Relieve our misery," which the Heb. will bear, and explain the words as referring not so much to a complete restoration of the exiles, as to a relief from sore trial which undoubtedly (see Ezra and Nehem., passim) pressed upon the young colony in its first days. According to this explanation, the image in *v.* 4 is not that of restoration and renovation, or of gratefulness and welcomeness, but rather of suddenness and unexpectedness. "O Jehovah, relieve our misery suddenly, and, as it may well be said, miraculously; as streams in the wilderness, which one moment are dead and dry, and then suddenly become flowing rivers."

The first interpretation is to be preferred, as it seems almost indispensable to refer *v.* 1 to the return from captivity, and to translate as in our Version; and to give the same import to the almost identical words of *v.* 4.

5. *They that sow*, &c.] "That for which we pray will surely come to pass." See Ezra vi. 16, 22, Neh. xii. 43, for, perhaps, the quick realization of the hope. The sower goes forth in deep despondency, fearing a new disappointment: he returns with joy and rejoicing, and carries the fruit of his toil. To *sow in tears*, and *go forth in tears*, may seem exaggerated expressions; but see the description of a sower in the East in Burder's 'Oriental Customs,' Vol. i. p. 123, applicable no doubt in a special degree to husbandmen in the early days of the Return. Galat. vi. 7, 9, contains a New Testament commentary upon this text: see too Matt. v. 4.

6. *bearing precious seed*] The substantive rendered *precious* occurs only in this place, and in Job xxviii. 18: "*the price* of wisdom is above rubies." Its meaning in the latter place is doubtful. Schultens considers its import to be "weight." "The weight (*i.e.* in the balance) of wisdom is above rubies:" so here: "bearing a *weight* or *burden* his seed." Others conceive it to mean the bag or wallet in which the seed is carried: so the marg. The most common opinion is that it means a "handful of seed," or "cast of seed," which is supported by the LXX., Vulg., and Syr.

The rhythm of the original in *v.* 6 is noticeable. The slow sad motion of the sower going forth to his work of sorrowful anticipation, is contrasted with his quick glad return, bearing his sheaves. "He goes forth in sorrow bearing his seed, he returns with joy and rejoicing, bearing his (golden) grain."

PSALM CXXVII.

The general purport of the psalm is, Jehovah, the Protector and Guardian of house and city: the Source from whence flows all good: the Giver (out of mere bounty) of children; of male children born in a man's youth, and strong and vigorous, Gen. xlix. 3:—"of such arrows whosoever hath his quiver full is safe." The psalm may have been composed upon the occasion of the birth of some child of promise; a supposition which would account for the amplification of the idea of the blessing of

EXCEPT the LORD build the house, they labour in vain † that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh *but* in vain.

† Heb. that are *builders of it in it.*

2 *It is* vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: *for* so he giveth his beloved sleep.

3 Lo, children *are* an heritage of the LORD: *and* the fruit of the womb *is his* reward.

4 As arrows *are* in the hand of a mighty man; so *are* children of the youth.

5 Happy *is* the man that † hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be

† Heb. *hath fil his quiv with the*

children at the end. Bishop Horsley supposes it to have been used for service in the temple when parents presented their firstborn according to the law (Exod. xxii. 29). The inscription, which may mean "by" or "relating to," or, as in our version, "for Solomon," is the principal reason for ascribing the psalm to him. The inscription is omitted in some MSS. of the LXX., and in other versions. It is rendered in the margin "of Solomon." A natural account of it, as interpreted by our translators, may be found in *v.* 2, which contains a manifest allusion to the king, his name, and the vision of the night which foretold his glory, 2 S. xii. 25; 1 K. iii. 5—13. The psalm contains a variety of expressions and sentiments similar to those which are allowed to have proceeded from the wise preacher, Prov. viii. 15, x. 12, 22, xvi. 9, &c.; but the argument drawn from its contents cannot be much relied on. Solomon would scarcely allude to himself by name, or repeat, in a psalm for public service, his written experience. The Syriac version ascribes the psalm to David, and conceives its subject to be David's purpose of building the temple in connection with the birth of Solomon. The place of the psalm in the collection, and its language in parts, suggest a date about or after the exile.

1. *Except the* LORD, &c.] The words rendered *build the house* may mean "arrange" or "raise up" "a family;" see Deut. xxv. 9; 1 S. ii. 35, &c. But the phrase is more expressive if its import be confined to its proper meaning: "Except Jehovah build the house, they labour in vain that build it. Except Jehovah's blessing rest upon it, the labour expended is wasted."

except the LORD *keep the city*, &c.] There is no direct allusion, in the first versicle, to Jehovah's House, *i.e.* the Temple, nor, here, to the city (exclusively) in which it is. Any house built without His blessing is built in vain! Unless Jehovah keep a city, the watch of the waker is in vain! A more exact rendering of the words in the first versicle is, "Except Jehovah build the house, they that build it labour in it in vain." Jonah iv. 10.

2. *It is vain for you*, &c.] The words *sit up late* should perhaps be rendered "sit down late," *i.e.* at meat. See 1 S. xx. 24. The custom of Israel, in early times, was to sit at meat. So the words are connected directly with what follows: *eat the bread of sorrows.*

the bread of sorrows] *i.e.* the scanty bread procured by hard toil, according to the primeval curse, Gen. iii. 17, 19. In Prov. iv. 17, the *bread of wickedness* is the bread obtained by wicked acts.

for so he giveth, &c.] *i.e.* "It is vain that ye rise up early," &c., "for he giveth to His beloved **in sleep** and **without labour, so**, *i.e.* **just as, even as**, to those who vainly harass themselves with labour and think not of Him."

his beloved] is one who trusts in Him, and whom He blesses in all his ways, and gives to him riches, honours, or wisdom, *as in sleep*, or *in sleep:* so He gave to Solomon himself, in sleep, His promise of all those things above mentioned: so parents provide for children who sleep the while, and wake to possessions for which they have not toiled.

If we translate as in the A.V. the meaning is, "Vain is your anxious labour, early rising, late resting, without Jehovah's blessing: for according to His pleasure He gives sleep to His beloved, *and all those things for which ye labour day and night in vain.*" But the ellipsis of the words in italics is too violent.

An over-anxious devotion to labour without confidence in God is censured. Earnest labour with eye turned to God Who blesses it, is everywhere approved in Scripture. See Proverbs, passim; Ps. cxxviii. 2, &c.

3. *Lo, children are an heritage*, &c.] The most signal of God's bounties to His beloved; children, the fruit of the womb, are His heritage, His gift, which comes from Him alone: gifts they are of mere goodness; scarcely understood as such, or prized enough, by those who enjoy these *rewards of God!*

4. *children of the youth*] *i. e.* children born to a man whilst he is young and able to rear them in tender years: and they too are able to protect him as age creeps on. A corresponding phrase occurs in Gen. xxxvii. 3, xliv. 20: Joseph and Benjamin were the sons *of Jacob's old age.* See also Isai. liv. 6, *a wife of youth.*

5. *Happy is the man*, &c.] "Happy the man

Or, *shall subdue*, as Ps. 18. 47, or, *destroy*.

ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.

PSALM CXXVIII.

The sundry blessings which follow them that fear God.

A Song of degrees.

BLESSED *is* every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways.

2 For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy *shalt* thou *be*, and *it shall be* well with thee.

3 Thy wife *shall be* as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.

4 Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD.

5 The LORD shall bless thee out of

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that hath his quiver full," or "that hath filled his quiver full," of such arrows; that hath his bosom filled with these most precious gifts of God. He shall not be ashamed in the presence of his enemies: he shall defend his cause, with the aid of his sons, boldly "at the gate," Deut. xxi. 19; Job v. 4; Isai. xxix. 21; Josh. xx. 4. Unrighteous judges, malicious accusers, false witnesses, all give way before a father so protected. A quiver, full of arrows, in the hand of a warrior, furnishes an expressive image of an abundant supply of needful resource. The change of number in *v.* 5, "Happy is the man," &c., "they shall not be ashamed," is common (see Ps. cvii. 43, &c.).

PSALM CXXVIII.

Luther calls this psalm a fit Epithalamium or Marriage-Song for Christians; it is used as such in our church. The burden of it is, the blessings of the true worshipper of God, in his labour, *v.* 2, wife, *v.* 3, children, ib., children's children and country, *v.* 4. It is, as to contents, a continuation, apparently, of Ps. cxxvii.; the subject a continuation of the subject of that psalm; and the first verse, joining to, and continuing, the last verse of it.

The ascent of ideas, and reiteration of significant words, is conspicuous in this psalm. The Syr. Version ascribes it to Zerubbabel. The place of the psalm in the psalter, its language, contents, and manner, suggest that it was written after the earliest perils of return from exile had abated.

2. *For thou shalt eat*, &c.] The allusion is to Lev. xxvi. 16; Deut. xxviii. 33; and perhaps Haggai i. 11, ii. 17; in which the disobedient are warned that their labour would be vain. The rendering should be, "Thou shalt eat, **verily**, the labour of thine hands," &c. The particle *For* does not occur in the beginning of the verse. See Ps. cxviii. 10, &c. *The labour of thine hands* is put for "the fruit of labour," as in Gen. xxxi. 42. Note, labour rewarded by God with fruit, is treated as the conspicuous gift of God! Note, too, the natural transition from the general sentiment in *v.* 1, to the address, in *v.* 2, to the fortunate labourer. Happiness, which is here and elsewhere promised to the true worshipper of God, is painted by its externals chiefly; the happiness in this life which is promised by Christ, Matt. v. 3, 4, to His followers, is pointedly internal.

3. *Thy wife shall be*, &c.] The wife is as the vine, the glory of the land, Num. xiii. 24; Deut. viii. 7, 8; a proverb, everywhere, for beauty, preciousness, and fertility (Gen. xlix. 11, 22; Judg. ix. 13; Ps. lxxx. 8, 9, 10): a plant, too, needing support, and clinging to it.

the sides of thine house] should rather be rendered, "the innermost chambers of thine house," and refer to "the wife," not "the vine." The words *the sides*, in the original, mean, in 1 S. xxiv. 3, "the inner recesses of a cave;" Isai. xiv. 15, "the depths of the pit;" Jonah i. 5, "the inner parts of a ship." The wife "in an inner chamber" rules her household, and does not wander abroad, as the wanton in Prov. vii. 12. The vine was not trained upon the "walls of houses," but in vineyards, upon terraces, on the "sides of hills," Isai. v. 1; Matt. xxi. 33: upon "supports," Ezek. xix. 11, 12 [see Note (1) at end of the psalm], or upon the ground. See the modern usage in Dean Stanley, 'S. and P.' pp. 162, 413, 414; Robinson's 'Bibl. Researches,' Vol. I. pp. 314, 316, Vol. II. p. 442, and 'Dict. of Bible,' p. 1685. As the wife is like the vine, the children are likened to olive-plants, and surround the table on which is abundant food. The olive, another glory of the land, is a proverb, everywhere, for productiveness, luxuriance, and fatness: Judg. ix. 9; Jer. xi. 16; Hosea xiv. 6. The similitude in the text is taken from a multitude of young olive-shoots clustering round the parent-tree, as described in Thomson's 'Land and Book,' p. 57. See the Note (2) below. The Prayer-Book Version by substituting "branches" for "plants" makes the idea of the original less easy to see.

5. *The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion*] The seat from whence He showers down blessings always upon His chosen: Pss. iii. 4, xiv. 7, xx. 2, cxxxiv. 3.

Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.

6 Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, *and* peace upon Israel.

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and thou shalt see] Lit. "and see," *i.e.* with satisfaction; the imperative for the future, which is painted as in sight. The blessing which follows a good man, under the old dispensation conspicuously, falls also upon his country; it is blessed all the days of his long (*v.* 6) life. Length of days, a well-known indication under that old covenant, of God's favour, Exod. xx. 12, &c. There is a stop after "children:"—the connecting particle "and" is not in the original.

6. *peace upon Israel*] The blessing at the end of the song, as in Ps. cxxv., &c.

NOTES on Psalm cxxviii. 3.

(1) The conversation in John xv. 1, 2, 3, is supposed by some to have been suggested by the vine creeping over the walls of the house in which the Saviour was: but probably it occurred after He left the chamber in which the supper was eaten, on Olivet, in the night-air. The vine may have been seen upon the moon-lit sides of Olivet, or creeping round the court of the house in which they were assembled. See John xiv. 31, "Arise, let us go hence." See Dean Stanley's 'S. and P.' p. 414, 1st ed.

(2) 1 S. xvi. 11, "And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: *for we will not sit down* (lit. *surround*, *i.e.* the table) till he come."

PSALM CXXIX.

1 *An exhortation to praise God for saving Israel in their great afflictions.* 5 *The haters of the church are cursed.*

A Song of degrees.

1 Or, *Much.*

1 MANY a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say:

2 Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth: yet they have not prevailed against me.

3 The plowers plowed upon my back: they made long their furrows.

4 The LORD *is* righteous: he hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked.

5 Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion.

Psalm cxxix.

The language and contents of this psalm, and the group of psalms with which it is connected, favour the common opinion that it is a composition of the early days after return from exile. The repetition of phrases, constituting a sort of burden, is noticeable in *vv.* 1, 2, and 8. The commencement calls to mind Ps. cxxiv. 1; the number of verses is the same; and not improbably the same author wrote both psalms.

The Psalmist, *vv.* 1—4, refers with thankfulness to the *many times* in days past in which God had delivered His people from destruction; and, *vv.* 5—8, anticipates with confident hope the shame and confusion of His enemies in time to come.

1. *Many a time*, &c.] Or, "Much," *i.e.* "grievously," as in the margin.

my youth] The thraldom in Egypt is often represented as the youth of Israel. See Isai. xlvii. 12, 15; Jer. ii. 2, iii. 25, &c.; Hos. ii. 15, xi. 1, &c. The young nation grew there, despite its taskmasters, till it threw off the yoke, and dwelt apart.

3. *The plowers*] An image precisely similar to this does not occur in Scripture: one somewhat similar occurs Isai. li. 23. The lashes inflicted upon the back of the writhing slave by a cruel master are compared to the long furrows pierced in the passive earth by the share of the plougher. See Mic. iii. 12. The next verse introduces a new image, naturally suggested by the last: the righteous God has cut asunder the cords (Heb. "cord") of the wicked, so that the yoked and wearied steer is released from its toil (cf. Ps. ii. 3).

5. *Let them all*, &c.] This verse and the next contain a prophecy, rather than a wish or prayer. All the enemies of Zion **will be put to shame**, and **driven back**, *i.e.* with shame and confusion, from "their enterprise" against Zion. They shall be *as grass upon the housetops*, that is not gathered nor garnered; that stirs up no cry, in mower or in passer-by, of joy and thankfulness; but perishes where it grew, unblessed and blasted: Isai. xxxvii. 27; 2 K. xix. 26.

Zion is the seat of Jehovah, out of which

6 Let them be as the grass *upon* the housetops, which withereth afore it groweth up:

7 Wherewith the mower filleth not his hand; nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom.

8 Neither do they which go by say, The blessing of the LORD *be* upon you: we bless you in the name of the LORD.

PSALM CXXX.

1 *The psalmist professeth his hope in prayer,* 5 *and his patience in hope.* 7 *He exhorteth Israel to hope in God.*

A Song of degrees.

OUT of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD.

2 Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.

He sends always blessings upon His chosen, Ps. cxxviii. 5. The grass which sprang up upon the flat roofs of the houses in Palestine, having no depth of earth, nor moisture, quickly withered away. The words *afore it groweth up* are ambiguous. Some interpret, "which withers before any one draw a sword and cut it down;" the ambiguous word being used in Judg. viii. 20, and elsewhere, in the sense of "drawing a sword out of the scabbard:" others, "which withers before any one pluck it up," and refer to Ruth iv. 7, 8, where the word in question is used in the sense of "drawing off," or "plucking off," a shoe. This interpretation is favoured by the LXX., Theod., and the P. B. V. Others, after the Chaldee paraphrase, "which withers before it put forth a sprout." This interpretation is favoured by the LXX. (according to a reading mentioned by Theodoret), agrees with the Authorized Version, and gives a sense suited to the context. The renderings, "which withereth before it is cut down," or "any one cut it down," or "before it is plucked up," or "any one pluck it up," seem too elliptical and harsh, and introduce an image which is pointless; while that of grass withering before it comes to maturity and produces flower or fruit is natural and apt.

Reuss remarks that *vv.* 7, 8 add nothing to the sense. Yet few verses of Scripture are more suggestive. In contrast to the withering and blasted grass upon the housetops, they call up to our imagination a scene of rural peace and prosperous labour like that of Ruth ii. 3: a scene too, Ewald remarks, often suggested in this group of psalms, and in some sort characteristic of it. The details of such a scene are dwelt upon in *vv.* 7, 8, to exhibit conspicuously the contrast between the enemies of Israel and of God (whose fate is to perish suddenly and without help), and His friends, who prosper in all their ways, and are cared for as treasured fruits, and blessed again and again, and in every way, by passers-by and lookers on, as the beloved of God. In Ruth ii. 4 Boaz says to the reapers, *The Lord be with you*, and the reapers answer, *The Lord bless thee*, but in these verses the passers-by bless twice in varied phrase.

PSALM CXXX.

This psalm is a manifest example of a "Psalm of Steps or Ascents:" see p. 455. From the depths of woe the Psalmist ascends, step after step, to absolute trust in God, and security of redemption. The iteration of phrases, *vv.* 5, 6, is also characteristic of this psalm; which in many respects reminds us of Ps. lxxxvi.

It may have been used at the general confession for national transgression described in Ezra ix. 5, 10: but its passionate earnestness and concentration of sorrow rather suggest individual sin, and (*v.* 1) present suffering, as its first occasion: on which supposition the sufferer, in *v.* 7, reads the lesson of his own experience to his beloved people.

The Psalmist says nothing of the severity of his chastisement, nor hints that it is undeserved; nay, he assumes that it is deserved; and still sharper punishment, if God should be extreme in marking what is amiss.

The words, *let thine ears be attentive*, in *v.* 2, occur in 2 Chro. vi. 40, vii. 15; and the word rendered "forgiveness," *v.* 4, only in Dan. ix. 9 and Neh. ix. 17. These expressions point to a late date; earlier, however, than Chronicles.

Luther, in sharp pain of body and peril of life, consoled his spirit by reciting again and again this sixth penitential psalm, which he has freely imitated in his well-known hymn, "Aus tiefer Noth," &c. The Christian doctrine of the forgiveness, through mere mercy, of sin, and of redemption through Christ's merits, lies so near the surface of this psalm that, we may say, the most careless may see it. The passionate earnestness of the psalm is enhanced by the repetition eight times in it of the Divine Name.

1. *Out of the depths*] That is, of misery and sorrow, the fruit of sin. The fuller expression of *deep waters* occurs Ps. lxix. 2, 14; Ezek. xxvii. 34; see too Pss. xlii. 7, lxxxviii. 7.

2. *Lord*] Heb. Adonai, "Sovereign Lord."

3 If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?

4 But *there is* forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.

5 I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope.

6 My soul *waiteth* for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: [1] *I say*, *more than* they that watch for the morning.

[1] Or, *which watch unto the morning.*

7 Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD *there is* mercy, and with him *is* plenteous redemption.

8 And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

PSALM CXXXI.

A Song of degrees of David, professing his humility, 3 exhorteth Israel to hope in God.

A Song of degrees of David.

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3. *mark iniquities*] That is, "notice curiously and recollect iniquities." See Job x. 14, xiv. 16, 17; Ps. xc. 8.

who shall stand?] "Who shall stand, and endure Thy Presence?" The full expression occurs Ps. lxxvi. 7. The image seems, in the first instance, drawn from a flight in battle before a too powerful foe. Comp. Amos ii. 15; Nahum i. 6; Mal. iii. 2.

4. *But there is forgiveness with thee*, &c.] Rather, "For with Thee is forgiveness," &c. A sentence is understood: "Away with such dark anticipation: for Thy property is mercy."

that thou mayest be feared] That is, with a holy and reverent fear which attracts and persuades: far different from a haughty confidence, which has never known anxiety: different too from abject terror, akin to alienation and aversion, which casts aside hope, and inclines to despair, rebellion, and hatred. See Jer. xxxiii. 9; Rom. ii. 4.

5. *his word*] That is, "word of promise." See Pss. cxix. 74, 81, 82: also Job xxxii. 11. "There are some," says Luther, "who instead of waiting for God, His time, His way, His help, take upon themselves to decide for Him, how, when, and in what degree, He shall aid. This is not to wait for Him; it is to make God wait upon them, and aid them as they define the way."

in his word do I hope, &c.] Or, "For His word do I look earnestly." Aq. ἐκαραδόκησα.

6. *My soul waiteth*, &c.] The literal rendering is, **My soul to Jehovah**; that is, "My soul is wholly Jehovah's." See Pss. cxxiii. 2, cxliii. 6. "I look to Him alone; with confidence the same, but desire far deeper, than that with which *watchers wait for the morning*; wait for the cheerful morning after the dark hours of night." The priests and Levites watching in the temple (Ps. cxxxiv. 1), and waiting for the morning, may be meant: so the Talmud and Chaldee interpreter. But rather any watchers are meant (Ps. cxxvii. 1) who wait for the morning-light after sleepless watchings: see Deut. xxviii. 67. The repetition of significant words (as noted above) is characteristic of this psalm, and also expresses the length and weariness of watching. See Isai. xxi. 11.

7. *Let Israel hope*, &c.] The P. B. V. is more correct, "O Israel, trust in the Lord," &c. The cry of distress is changed into a declaration of trust, "Jehovah is merciful: therefore His power to save is great as His will; and He will save from sin and death." The original word does not mean simply "mercy," but "the mercy;" that is, "the mercy to Him peculiar." Kay quotes the words of the Communion-Service, "Thy property is always to have mercy:" so in *v.* 4, not simply "forgiveness," but "the forgiveness for which Thou art known and feared" is expressed.

8. *he shall redeem*, &c.] *he* emphatic.

PSALM CXXXI.

The inscription assigns the psalm to David; and the spirit, manner and contents of its earlier verses confirm the title. The incident mentioned in 2 S. vi. 22 is supposed by some to have given occasion to the psalm: but other incidents in the life of the king are fully as apposite.

Greatness of soul and a true humility characterized David in obscurity and upon the throne. He sought not the kingdom till God ordained him to it. He bore the persecutions of Saul with patience, and avenged his death and that of Ishbosheth. He allowed Shimei to curse. A psalm upon humility and practical trust in God, and a faithful waiting upon Him, would come with special force from David. It may be said of this psalm, as of almost every other, that its conciseness, rapidity and earnestness, assure us that it was written upon some occasion that naturally called it forth. Hupfeld, Ewald, De Wette, Delitzsch, and many others, consider it of the date of the exile, and attributed to David on account of its resemblance to Pss. xviii., ci. The omission of the inscription in the Septuagint Version seems the principal argument for doubting the authorship. The place of the psalm in the psalter

LORD, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I †exercise myself in great matters, or in things too †high for me.

2 Surely I have behaved and quieted †myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul *is* even as a weaned child.

3 Let Israel hope in the LORD †from henceforth and for ever.

Heb. *walk.* Heb. *wonderful.* Heb. *my soul.* † Heb. *from now.*

PSALM CXXXII.

1 *David in his prayer commendeth unto God the religious care he had for the ark.* 8 *His prayer at the removing of the ark,* 11 *with a repetition of God's promises.*

A Song of degrees.

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may be simply owing to its use in the services of the latter temple.

The reference to the days of the Maccabees (1 Macc. xiv.) by Hitzig is supported by no argument of much weight.

1. *LORD, my heart*, &c.] The seat of pride is the heart: it is exhibited in look, or eye (a similar expression Pss. xviii. 27, ci. 5), or in action. The lofty matters in which the Psalmist does not love, and has not loved, to *exercise* himself ("to walk," marg.), that is, *to meditate incessantly* (Ps. i. 2), are, perhaps, the ways of God, which are wonderful (Ps. cxxxix. 6; Jer. xxxiii. 3), and too high for him; the scheme of redemption; the prosperity of the wicked, and similar mysteries. The word rendered *high* would seem to mean "hard" or "wonderful." Gen. xviii. 14; Deut. xxx. 11; Job xlii. 3.

2. *Surely I have behaved...myself*, &c.] Lit. "If I have not behaved and quieted my spirit," &c. The full expression may be gathered from Ruth i. 17 (orig.), "If I have not done so and so, may the Lord do so and so," &c. See also Isai. v. 9 (orig.); Job xvii. 2 (orig.). The import is, as in our Version, "Surely, instead of exercising myself in too high matters, I have behaved and quieted myself," &c. The rendering *behaved* seems put for "restrained" or "disciplined:" the original word is metaphorical, and suggests the image of a "ploughman levelling the furrows," see Isai. xxviii. 25, or, it may be, of the waves of the sea *levelling* after a storm. The image next introduced, *quieted* (that is, "stilled," or "calmed"), is that of silence and peace, as of the sea after tumult, coupled with an idea of "waiting;" see Ps. lxii. 1; Lam. iii. 26. The following words introduce a still new image—*as a child that is weaned of his mother*, or, rather, "as a child that is weaned by, near, or upon, its mother." The spirit of the Psalmist is still, as the weaned child is tranquil on its mother's breast: irregular desires, ambitious longings, appetite for knowledge too high for him, have all given place to "rest in God," the hope of the singer. The next versicle, *my soul is even as a weaned child*, does not repeat the image above-mentioned. Rather the soul of the Psalmist is itself styled now "the weaned child;" "even so, stilled and quieted, is the weaned child within me, or upon me, my soul."

3. *Let Israel*, &c.] Rather, "O Israel, hope," &c. "The Psalmist," says Ewald, "describes a contentment, resignation, and devotion to the divine will, the most absolute, after lengthened struggles and temptations. The storm of passion has been allayed, all proud longings and vain expectations have been curbed. As a child at rest the poet *waits* the future which is before him, with joyous confidence in its revelations, and faithful encouragement to his people to wait with him. Nothing can be more beautiful than the sketch in the psalm of a *new birth* to a *new life:* nothing more striking than *its guarantee* of *a better future* which the anticipated new birth holds out: nothing more suggestive of the noblest promise than the renunciation of all selfish personal aims, and resolution of them into a prayer for the nation's weal." The short lovely song is as a bud in spring which waits for the light to display its beauty and spread abroad its sweetness. The light of Christianity and the spirit of Christianity has now shone upon it, warmed it, and discovered its closely packed excellencies, and hidden significances, which David who sang, and Israel who listened, may not have apprehended.

PSALM CXXXII.

A prayer to Jehovah for the continuance of David's line. *Vv.* 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 describe David's labour and anxiety in making preparation for building "a house for Jehovah:" *v.* 6 introduces, as it would seem, *the people* singing some of the localities (see below) in which the Ark of God was heard of or seen in ancient days and before its settlement on Mount Zion, and men's uncertainties about it: *v.* 7 expresses the joy and satisfaction of all men at the opportunity afforded of praising Jehovah in His new abode: *v.* 8 is the address to Him, and prayer, that He would take up His rest, and abide with His people: *vv.* 9, 10, contain special prayers for happiness and peace to priests and people, through Jehovah abiding close to them; followed, in *vv.* 11, 12, 13, by a reference, in connection with such prayers, to the promise made to David and his seed, in case of obedience: in *vv.* 14—18, Jehovah replies to all the above entreaties and references; proclaims His love for Zion, and determination

LORD, remember David, *and* all his afflictions:

2 How he sware unto the LORD, *and* vowed unto the mighty *God* of Jacob;

3 Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed;

4 I will not give sleep to mine eyes, *or* slumber to mine eyelids,

5 Until I find out a place for the LORD, †an habitation for the mighty *God* of Jacob.

† Heb. *habitations.*

6 Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah: we found it in the fields of the wood.

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to rest in it for ever; to bless it and its inhabitants, always, with choicest blessings; and to raise up a horn to His anointed, for the confusion of His enemies, and His own perpetual renown.

The characteristics of "Psalms of Degrees" are not seen in this psalm: its length, too, discriminates it from the rest of the group in which it is; and the ordinary parallelism of Hebrew poetry is noticeable in it, *vv.* 1, 2, 3, 4, &c. In *vv.* 2, 5, 9, 10, 13, 14, a repetition of significant phrases reminds of Gesenius' view, p. 455.

There is a manifest resemblance in style, diction and matter between the ps. and Ps. lxxii.

It is most difficult to assign any time at which it was probably written. A considerable portion, *vv.* 1—8, 13, 14, of it suits the great occasion of the settlement of the ark on Mount Zion; but the absence of a title ascribing the psalm to David, the mention of him in *vv.* 10, 17, and the occurrence of the psalm in a collection of later psalms, are against the supposition that he was the author. So too the absence of a title ascribing the psalm to Solomon, and its place in the book of Psalms, are against the opinion (of Tholuck, De Wette, and others) that Solomon was the author. A favourite notion is that it was written after the exile: and that the *anointed* mentioned in *vv.* 10, 17, is Zerubbabel, or Simon the Maccabee, or other late king or priest. The interest, spirit, and significance of the psalm are greatly sacrificed by this supposition. The first verses describing David's labour and care in reference to Jehovah's first resting-place become in comparison pointless: the details respecting the ark (*vv.* 6—8), which did not survive the captivity, become uninteresting. The building of the first temple is not (probably) mentioned; and the allusions in *vv.* 11, 12, 15, 18. to the line of David, and Jehovah's promised blessings, uttered in a free, joyous, spirit, scarcely suit the nation's decline.

Possibly the psalm may be composed, as Ps. lxviii., of various ancient fragments of David and others, with additions of later date. The additions, now, it may be impossible to discriminate from the older portions. The great obscurity of the psalm and its abruptness favour this supposition: see *vv.* 1, 6, 8, &c. The early part may have been written for the great event of David's life: see Dean Stanley, 'Jewish Church,' Vol. II. p. 85: *vv.* 13, 14 can scarcely have been written for any other occasion. Solomon may have used the psalm upon a still greater occasion: in fact, *vv.* 8, 9, with slight change, occur 2 Chro. vi. 41, 42, in Solomon's prayer. The inestimable fragments may have been used in the temple service without alteration at later opportunities, and words added, which give the whole a character suited to a later age.

The ark was some time at Mizpeh, Judg. xx. 1; some time at Shiloh, 1 S. iv. 3; for twenty years at Kirjath-jearim, 1 S. vii. 2; three months in the house of Obed-edom, 2 S. vi. 11.

The words of the psalm do not decide absolutely the question whether the vow, *v.* 2, refers to the building of the temple, or to the building of a permanent, instead of a temporary, abode for the ark: see Ps. lxxviii. 67, &c. In the days of Saul men troubled not themselves about it; 1 Chro. xiii. 3.

1, 2. *LORD, remember David,* &c.] Rather, **Remember, O Lord, to David,** &c. "To David," *i.e.* in order to a divine recompense. We read, in 1 Chro. xxii. 14, of David's *trouble*, *i.e.* painful anxiety and affliction (Isai. liii. 4; Ps. cxix. 71), in making preparation for building a permanent House for Jehovah. The vow need not be interpreted literally, nor its terms, to which the LXX. add, pressed: it describes the king's fixed determination to execute the work without stint of labour and price. According to the word of Nathan, 2 S. vii. 2, 3, &c., Jehovah Himself interfered to delay the execution.

3. *Surely*] In the original the same form of expression as in the preceding psalm, *v.* 2.

the tabernacle of my house] Or, "the tabernacle or tent which is my house," a poetical periphrasis for "my house."

into my bed] Or, more precisely, "into the bed (which is) my couch," *i.e.* of rest. See a similar expression, Gen. xlix. 4.

5. *the mighty God of Jacob*] Or, "the mighty (One) of Jacob." See the original phrase, Gen. xlix. 24; also Isai. i. 24, xlix. 26, &c.

6. *Lo, we heard of it,* &c.] Lit. "We

7 We will go into his tabernacles: we will worship at his footstool.

8 [a]Arise, O LORD, into thy rest; thou, and the ark of thy strength.

9 Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness; and let thy saints shout for joy.

10 For thy servant David's sake turn not away the face of thine anointed.

11 The LORD hath sworn *in* truth unto David; he will not turn from it; [b]Of the fruit of [†]thy body will I set upon thy throne.

12 If thy children will keep my covenant and my testimony that I shall teach them, their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore.

13 For the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired *it* for his habitation.

14 This *is* my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it.

15 I will ‖abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread.

16 I will also clothe her priests with salvation: and her saints shall shout aloud for joy.

17 [c]There will I make the horn of

Numb. x. 35. 2 Chron. 6. 41.

2 Sam. 7. 12. 1 Kin. 8. 25. 2 Chron. 6. 16. Luke 1. 69. Acts 2. 30.

† Heb. *thy belly.*

‖ Or, *surely.*

[c] Luke 1. 69.

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heard of it, *i.e.* the ark (implied, but not expressed, in *v.* 5), in Ephratah; we found it in the fields of the forest." The words, it may be, of the people: Ephratah, or Ephrath, is a well-known title of Bethlehem (Gen. xxxv. 19; Ruth iv. 11; Mic. v. 2); but we have no authority for saying that the ark was at Bethlehem. Some imagine the words of *vv.* 6, 7 to be a continuation of the words of David which precede: "Lo! we heard of it, *i.e.* the ark, in our tender infancy at Ephratah or Bethlehem, and found it in the fields of the wood, *i.e.* at Kirjath-jearim." But the words, *we heard of it at Ephratah*, can scarcely mean anything but "we heard of it (as being) at Ephratah." It must be confessed that no interpretation of the place is satisfactory: the allusion may be to an incident not recorded.

7. *his tabernacles*] Lit. "His habitations," as in the marg., *i.e.* upon Mount Zion; see *v.* 5.

his footstool] *i.e.* the ark dwelling within His tabernacle. See Ps. xcix. 5; 1 Chro. xxviii. 2. Jehovah dwells (Ps. lxxx. 1) above or upon the cherubim: the ark is under His feet.

8. *Arise, O* LORD, &c.] A similar cry was raised in the wilderness when the ark was moved each morning from its rest at night, Num. x. 35, 36; Ps. lxviii. 1. The Ark of God is only mentioned here by name in the psalms. See 2 Chro. vi. 41.

9. *Let thy priests*, &c.] "Let Thy priests be clad in fitting attire (see Lev. vi. 10), figuring the inner, still more glorious, attire, which they should wear, of holiness and obedience to Him Whom they serve;" Job xxix. 14; Isai. lxi. 10; Rev. xix. 8. *And let Thy saints*, *i.e.* Thy chosen people generally, "shout for joy at the majestic prospect before all."

10. *For thy servant David's sake*, &c.] A disappointed suppliant turns away his face, and retires disconsolate. So "to turn away the face" is "to reject the prayer" of a petitioner. See 1 K. ii. 16, 17, 20 (Heb.); 2 K. xviii. 24. The anointed is, undoubtedly, the suppliant, theocratic king, who speaks in the psalm. The prayer is, that God would abide always with His people, and grant the blessings which follow in His train, *vv.* 9, 10, &c.

11. *The* LORD *hath sworn*, &c.] In the prayer at the dedication of the temple, 1 K. viii. 25 (see the promise 2 S. vii. 12—16), Jehovah is similarly reminded of His promise to David's line. The more accurate rendering of the verse would be, "The Lord hath sworn to David: it is truth: He will not swerve," &c. The intense earnestness and solemnity of the words suggest the opinion that they were written whilst the line of David was upon the throne: and not at a later time when hope was faint or extinct. See Ps. lxxxix. 3, 4.

13. *For the* LORD, &c.] Tholuck supposes these words to refer to the settlement of the ark by Solomon in its final resting-place; and suggests that Zion may mean the hill of Zion including Mount Moriah, upon which the temple was built. But rather (Moll, &c.), Zion seems used here (as often in the later pss.) for the city of Jerusalem; as the verses following describe the blessings to descend upon its king and people through the choice of it by Jehovah as His rest for ever. The abundance, *v.* 15, overflows to the poor: the salvation, *i.e.* health, prosperity, and divine endowments, of the priests, overflows in happiness to the whole people. In *v.* 9, the *prayer* is, that "the priests be clothed with righteousness." In the word (*vv.* 14—16) of Jehovah in reply, the blessing is *promised* but in altered phrase.

17. *There will I make*, &c.] Or, "There will I make a horn to branch forth to, or for, David." A horn, the symbol of dominion (Ps. cxii. 9; Jer. xlviii. 25; Mic. iv. 13;

David to bud: I have ordained a [1]lamp for mine anointed.

18 His enemies will I clothe with shame: but upon himself shall his crown flourish.

[1] Or, *candle.*

PSALM CXXXIII.

The benefit of the communion of saints.

A Song of degrees of David.

BEHOLD, how good and how pleasant *it is* for brethren to dwell [†] together in unity!

[†] Heb. *even together.*

2 *It is* like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, *even* Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;

3 As the dew of Hermon, *and as the*

Ezek. xxix. 21, &c.). The image is taken from the notion of a powerful animal with one horn; or from the custom in eastern countries of wearing a horn upon the ornaments of the head. See Burder's 'Oriental Customs,' Vol. I. pp. 118, 120, also note, Ps. xcii. 10. The image in Deut. xxxiii. 17, and 1 K. xxii. 11, is different: it is borrowed from bulls or buffaloes that strike or push with their horns. The image again in Job xvi. 15 is different: *horn* is there used simply for "head." David, in this place, is put for *his line.*

A lamp shining and giving light to a household is a common symbol of prosperity and glory (2 S. xxi. 17; 1 K. xi. 36, xv. 4; Ps. xviii. 28). Similar images occur in Ezek. xxix. 21; Jer. xxiii. 5, xxxiii. 15; Zech. iii. 8, vi. 12. It cannot be doubted that Messiah, the Branch of Jehovah and of Righteousness, the Horn of Salvation, the Lamp of Jehovah, on Whose Head a crown perpetual flourishes, is pointed at, with more or less distinctness, in all the passages just quoted; and so the Jews themselves explain. One of their daily prayers is, "Soon may the Branch, the Root of David, spring up, and His Horn be excellent," &c.

Psalm CXXXIII.

Some doubt is thrown upon the authority of the inscription, which ascribes this psalm to David, by its omission in the LXX., Chaldee, and other versions, and in some Hebrew MSS. The Alexandrian copy of the LXX., however, retains it.

The inscription may mean, not that the psalm was written by David, but that it breathes his spirit: or, that it has reference to him that loved Jonathan as a brother, and lamented him when dead with a brother's sorrow.

The subject is brotherly love. Is the love of brethren living in one family as brethren, intended, or the brotherly love, as it may be called, of citizens and countrymen living together in one city compact in unity? It is best to interpret the simple, graphic, original psalm according to the obvious meaning of its words, and not to mix up with the interpretation of it inferences and applications. The psalm may have been suggested to the Psalmist by the sight or the tale of some family living as described in it, *together, united in affection, as by blood.*

In *vv.* 2, 3 a repetition of significant words, "that *ran down upon the beard, the beard of Aaron*, and *ran down* (orig.) to the skirts of his clothing," &c., reminds us of the view of Gesenius, p. 455, touching these Psalms of Degrees.

1. *Behold, how good*, &c.] Heb. "that brethren should dwell also together." See marg.

2. *It is like the precious ointment*, &c.] Like the "precious oil that is poured upon the head of Aaron" (Exod. xxx. 23—33; Lev. xxi. 10), flowing over his beard and clothing, consecrating the man and his vestments, see Lev. viii. 12, 30, uniting them together as one body, 1 Cor. xii. 14, and filling all space around with a delightful fragrance. Concord of brethren, united in one household and loving as brethren, is similarly excellent and precious; diffusing all around a delightful satisfaction; and suggesting, to those who witness it, a vision of peace and love, and of sympathy and brotherhood ever extending.

The exact rendering of the Hebrew is, "As the precious oil (poured) upon the head, descending upon the beard — upon Aaron's beard—that descends (or is seen descending) also to the edge of his clothing." The edge of his clothing is the upper edge or border terminating the robe, and girdling the neck; or perhaps the lower edge or rim, terminating the robe below the waist. The word employed, which means literally "mouth," suits best the first of these interpretations. See Exod. xxviii. 32; Job xxx. 18.

3. *As the dew of Hermon*, &c.] Heb. "As the dew of Hermon that falls down upon the hills of Zion," &c. Concord again is like the dew of Hermon, which falls, gently, copiously, imperceptibly, *watering* the land of promise. See Prov. xix. 12; Mic. v. 7. The dew of Hermon may be mentioned as a well-known copious dew: it seems an exaggeration that it is described as falling upon "the hills of Zion:" but the

dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, *even* life for evermore.

PSALM CXXXIV.

An exhortation to bless God.

A Song of degrees.

BEHOLD, bless ye the LORD, all *ye* servants of the LORD, which by night stand in the house of the LORD.

2 Lift up your hands ‖*in* the sanctuary, and bless the LORD.

‖ Or, in *holiness,*

3 The LORD that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion.

PSALM CXXXV.

1 *An exhortation to praise God for his mercy,* 5 *for his power,* 8 *for his judgments.* 15 *The vanity of idols.* 19 *An exhortation to bless God.*

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summit of Hermon can be seen, towering aloft and covered with snow, to the borders of the Dead Sea; and the storm bursting upon the summit of Hermon, see Ps. xxix., is felt all through the land to the distant wilderness. Some interpret "*the mountains of Zion*," as "mount *Sion which is Hermon*," Deut. iv. 48; but the spelling of the two words is different; the point of the illustration is lost if the holy hill of Zion is not introduced; and the meaning is insipid if the dew of Hermon simply falls upon the hills of Hermon. It falls upon Hermon first, upon the valleys below, and upon every hill and every valley through the whole of Palestine; and so is an apt image of "brotherly love," which, seen in a narrow circle, expands from it, as waves from a centre, and leavens a whole community and an entire nation.

The A. V., *As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion*, seems to destroy the correspondence of the two images of the oil and dew; the oil which descends upon the beard and then upon the garments of the priest, and the dew which descends upon the distant hills of Zion, and connects them in some sort with the mountains from which the dew proceeds. *The mountains of Zion* is an unusual expression. See Dean Stanley's 'Sin. and Pal.' p. 396, note.

for there, &c.] That is, in Zion, without a mention of which this song of brotherly love would be incomplete.

PSALM CXXXIV.

The psalm consists of two parts: *vv.* 1, 2, make the first part, and *v.* 3, the second. In the first part, the Psalmist, in the name of the community of Israel, incites *the servants* of Jehovah, *i.e.* the Priests and Levites, ere they enter upon the nightly offices of the sanctuary, to praise and bless Jehovah effectively. "He urges them," says Calvin, "not to stand idle in their ministry, nor spend the night in arranging the ceremonial of the services, lighting the lamps, and preparing the sacrifices, a work comparatively naught and profitless, but to pray also in spirit, and praise God from the heart." In part 2, the choir of ministers so addressed promises Jehovah's blessing, according to their effectual prayer, to the whole people, and to each individual of it. Compare Ps. cxxxv. 1, 2.

1. *by night stand*, &c.] *Stand*, *i.e.* minister (Deut. x. 8, xviii. 7; Prov. xxii. 29, &c.) in the temple. The offices were performed, probably, by night as well as day. See Lev. viii. 35; 1 S. iii. 3; 1 Chro. ix. 33; see too Luke ii. 37. The words added here in the P. B. V., "even in the courts of the house of our God," are from the LXX.

2. *Lift up your hands in the sanctuary*] See Pss. v. 7, xxviii. 2, xcix. 5, cxxxviii. 2. Pray to Jehovah, with faces turned, and hands lifted, **towards** *the sanctuary*.

3. *The* LORD *that made*, &c.] "Jehovah Who made heaven and earth (Pss. cxxi. 2, cxxiv. 8) **shall send** from Zion, in which He abides (Ps. cxxviii. 5), the choicest blessings upon His people." "The Lord bless thee," or "shall bless thee," is the ordinary form of priestly blessing (see Num. vi. 24), addressed to each individual of a community or congregation.

Some expositors (Hupfeld, &c.) reject the notion of two speakers, *vv.* 1, 2, and 3, and conceive the Psalmist alone to speak; in *vv.* 1, 2, urging the ministers of the temple to alacrity in their worship; and, in *v.* 3, promising Jehovah's blessing as attendant upon it. On this supposition it is hard to explain the change of expression (orig.) in *vv.* 1, 2, and 3: but it must needs be a matter of conjecture who the speakers are.

The *burden* of this short song, which is *blessing thrice repeated*, reminds us finally of Gesenius's doctrine touching the Psalms of Degrees, p. 455.

PSALM CXXXV.

A Hallelujah Psalm (*v.* 1), for Temple Service. There is a correspondence, between this psalm and the last, as between a painting and its rough sketch. It invites the Priests and Levites who minister in the House of Jehovah to sing His praises and wonderful

PRAISE ye the LORD. Praise ye the name of the LORD; praise *him*, O ye servants of the LORD.

2 Ye that stand in the house of the LORD, in the courts of the house of our God,

3 Praise the LORD; for the LORD *is* good: sing praises unto his name; for *it is* pleasant.

4 For the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto himself, *and* Israel for his peculiar treasure.

5 For I know that the LORD *is* great, and *that* our Lord *is* above all gods.

6 Whatsoever the LORD pleased, *that* did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.

7 [a]He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his treasuries. [a] Jer. 10. 13.

8 [b]Who smote the firstborn of Egypt, [†]both of man and beast. [b] Exod. 12. 29. [†] Heb. *from man unto beast.*

9 *Who* sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee, O Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his servants.

10 [c]Who smote great nations, and slew mighty kings; [c] Numb. 21. 24, 25, 26, 34, 35.

11 Sihon king of the Amorites, and

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works in nature (*vv.* 6, 7), and in deliverances of His people (*vv.* 8, 9, 10). With His wondrous doings and His power which endures for ever (*vv.* 13, 14), it contrasts the might of idols which see not, hear not, do not, are not (*vv.* 15, 16).

Delitzsch styles it a mosaic, made up for the most part of pieces selected from other psalms, and from the prophetical writings. Pss. xcvii. and xcviii. are specimens, among the psalms, of similar compilations. Jeremiah's prophecies contain, similarly, many words of ancient prophecy inserted into the body of his instructions. The passages referred to in this psalm are for the most part known, and reference is made to them as they occur.

The date and author cannot be ascertained: but the language in many parts and its character, as above described, seem to point to a late date.

1. *ye servants*, &c.] As in Ps. cxxxiv. 1 these words probably indicate the Priests and Levites. The Levites ministered before God in His house (Deut. x. 8; 1 Chro. xxiii. 3), and sang praises to Him continually. The Priests ministered day and (probably) night, offering sacrifices, repeating prayers, and joining in songs of praise. The mention of *courts* suggests to some the notion that the whole people are addressed. But the expression seems only equivalent to "house of Jehovah;" Pss. lxxxiv. 3, xcii. 13, cxvi. 19, &c.

3. *for it is pleasant*] to sing praises to His name, as in Ps. cxlvii. 1; Prov. xxii. 18: see also Ps. cxxxiii. 1: or, rather, "for it (*i.e.* His name) is pleasant or lovely;" see Ps. liv. 6.

4. *For the* LORD, &c.] The words of Deut. vii. 6 are recited.

5. *For I know*, &c.] Emphatic: I know from experience; recent and decisive it may be: see Exod. iii. 19; 1 S. xvii. 28.

gods] Elohim; gods, so called, of the heathen.

6. *Whatsoever*, &c.] Ps. cxv. 3. "The specification of Jehovah's doings according to His pleasure, in heaven, earth, the sea, and all deep places," says Calvin, "puts before us in a graphic manner His particular care always and everywhere." In Ex. xx. 4, heaven, earth, and water under the earth, are used to describe all creation.

7. *He causeth*, &c.] Jer. x. 13, li. 16. The clouds rising up in the far horizon fraught with abundance of rain (1 K. xviii. 44) are intended.

he maketh lightnings for the rain] Or, to bring forth rain (LXX. ἀστραπὰς εἰς ὑετὸν ἐποίησεν), when nature is parched up through a long drought. Some render "lightnings with rain" (P. B. V.), which is (in comparison) pointless. Lightning is described as in itself God's wondrous work: beneficent, too, in clearing the air; and issuing (though fire and water seem of all things most opposed) miraculously in rain: see Ps. xxix. 10; Zech. x. 1. The expression, *ends of the earth*, does not strictly mean the horizon; but, the earth being a vast plain of which the ends are out of the reach of man's sight, God there stores His clouds (in the A. V. *vapours*), as He stores His winds in secret hollow treasure-houses: out of these distant, secret, stores He summons clouds and winds at His pleasure: see Job xxxviii. 22; Ps. xxxiii. 7. A somewhat similar figure Virg. 'Æn.' II. 25.

With *vv.* 8—12 compare cxxxvi. 10—22.

9. *into the midst of thee*, &c.] Ps. cxvi. 19. *Pharaoh and his servants*, *i.e.* his ministers and courtiers; Exod. v. 21, vii. 10.

10. *Who smote*, &c.] Deut. iv. 38, vii. 2, ix. 1, &c. Sihon, Deut. ii. 30; Num. xxi. 21—23. Sihon and Og are mentioned as the

Og king of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan:

[d] Josh. 12. 7.

12 [d]And gave their land *for* an heritage, an heritage unto Israel his people.

13 Thy name, O LORD, *endureth* for ever; *and* thy memorial, O LORD, [†] throughout all generations.

[†] Heb. *to generation and generation.*

14 For the LORD will judge his people, and he will repent himself concerning his servants.

[e] Ps. 115. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

15 [e]The idols of the heathen *are* silver and gold, the work of men's hands.

16 They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not;

17 They have ears, but they hear not; neither is there *any* breath in their mouths.

18 They that make them are like unto them: *so is* every one that trusteth in them.

19 Bless the LORD, O house of Israel: bless the LORD, O house of Aaron:

20 Bless the LORD, O house of Levi: ye that fear the LORD, bless the LORD.

21 Blessed be the LORD out of Zion, which dwelleth at Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.

PSALM CXXXVI.

An exhortation to give thanks to God for particular mercies.

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most potent of the vanquished kings, Amos ii. 9: or rather, as the first vanquished and slain, Num. xxi. 33, 34; Josh. xii. 2—4. Their slaughter led to the occupation of the Land of Promise, and seems to have made a deep impression upon the victorious people; see the places quoted.

11. *all the kingdoms*, &c.] Deut. iii. 21.

12. *gave their land*, &c.] Deut. iv. 38.

13, 14. *Thy name*, &c.] See Exod. iii. 15. Thy Name endures for ever on account of Thy glorious deeds (*vv.* 7, 8, 9, 10) in days past and now; for Jehovah will *judge*, *i.e.* vindicate His servants against oppression always; and *repent* Him of chastisement; and pity according to His mercies, Deut. xxxii. 36: see also Gen. xxx. 6; Pss. liv. 1, xc. 13, cii. 13.

15. *The idols of the heathen*, &c.] See Ps. cxv. 4, &c.; the latter part of *v.* 17 differs from Ps. cxv. 6, *noses have they, but they smell not*, but yet in a way (orig.) imitates it.

19. *Bless the* LORD, &c.] Pss. cxv. 10—12, cxviii. 2—4. The mention of the Levites is peculiar to this psalm.

21. *Blessed be the* LORD, &c.] The united prayer and blessing of all mentioned before, the house of Israel, of Aaron, of Levi, and all that fear God, and of the Psalmist himself. See Ps. cxxxiv. 3, in which verse, however, Jehovah's blessing is promised out of Zion. Here, on the other hand, His blessing begins with Zion and goes forth from thence.

Olshausen, J. and others esteem this variation of the sense of the place imitated unpleasing, and would alter the Hebrew text: but we must recollect other verses in the psalm which recal places of Scripture without exactly copying them (see *v.* 9 and *v.* 17 for instance), and interpret this verse apart from any special reference to the verse which it calls to mind. Jehovah is praised and blessed in Zion, and out of Zion His praise shall go forth unto all lands. Zion is put, as often, for Jerusalem where God dwells: and the word before us is descriptive of the day of the Psalmist, and prophetic of after days; at the very least, true in a sense above that which the Psalmist, looking simply to his own day, could intend.

"For," says Delitzsch, "has not Jehovah's blessing gone forth to all lands from Zion, and reached, too, those critics who cavil at the Word which themselves confirm?"

PSALM CXXXVI.

The Psalmist, *vv.* 1—9, celebrates Jehovah, Creator of heaven and earth; *vv.* 10—22, Redeemer of His people out of bondage, Leader through the waste, Giver of the land of promise and Slayer of His enemies; *v.* 23, Protector of His people always and at the present moment in trouble; and *vv.* 25, 26, the Universal Parent.

The words, Ezra iii. 11, suggest to Rosenmüller and others that the psalm may have been used at the foundation of the second temple; the Levites singing the first part of each verse, and the people responding. A great resemblance is pointed out (Thrupp, Vol. II. pp. 281, &c.) between the psalm and the confession in Neh. ch. ix. It is vain to inquire at what precise time a psalm with contents apposite to so many occasions may have been used first; but the date is without doubt after the exile. Somewhat similar responses of chorus or people are instanced in Exod. xv. 20, 21; Deut. xxvii. 15, &c.

David (1 Chro. xvi. 41) ordained that the Levites should continually chant before the

[a] Ps. 106. 1. & 107. 1. & 118. 1.

O [a]GIVE thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

2 O give thanks unto the God of gods: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

3 O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

4 To him who alone doeth great wonders: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

[b] Gen. 1. 1.

5 [b]To him that by wisdom made the heavens: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

[c] Gen. 1. 6. Jer. 10. 12.

6 [c]To him that stretched out the earth above the waters: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

[d] Gen. 1. 14.

7 [d]To him that made great lights: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

[†] Heb. *for the rulings by day.*

8 The sun [†]to rule by day: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

9 The moon and stars to rule by night: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

[e] Exod. 12. 29.

10 [e]To him that smote Egypt in their firstborn: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

[f] Exod. 13. 17.

11 [f]And brought out Israel from among them: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

12 With a strong hand, and with a stretched out arm: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

[g] Exod. 14. 21, 22.

13 [g]To him which divided the Red sea into parts: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

14 And made Israel to pass through the midst of it: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

[h] Exod. 14. 28. [†] Heb. *shaked off.*

15 [h]But [†]overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

[i] Exod. 15. 22.

16 [i]To him which led his people through the wilderness: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

17 To him which smote great kings: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

[k] Deut. 29. 7. Ps. 135. 10, 11.

18 [k]And slew famous kings: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

[l] Numb. 21. 21.

19 [l]Sihon king of the Amorites: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

[m] Numb. 21. 33.

20 [m]And Og the king of Bashan: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

[n] Josh. 12. 7.

21 [n]And gave their land for an

Lord a psalm, of which the burden should be, "That His mercy endureth for ever;" and such a psalm apparently was often used, 2 Chro. vii. 3 and xx. 21. The burden of this psalm occurs Pss. cvi. 1 and cxviii. 1. One characteristic of it is that it repeats words and phrases of other psalms (specially Ps. cxxxv.) and prophecies (specially Isaiah), with amplifications. The places are noted as they occur.

2, 3. *God of gods* and *Lord of lords*] Deut. x. 17, &c.

4. *who alone*, &c.] Pss. lxxii. 18, lxxxvi. 10, &c.

5. *by wisdom*, &c.] Prov. iii. 19; Jer. x. 12; Ps. civ. 24.

6. *stretched out*] Isai. xlii. 5, xliv. 24.

above the waters] See Ps. xxiv. 2; Ex. xx. 4. The waters of the great deep (Gen. vii. 11) are meant, above which the crust of earth is outspread. In Prov. viii. 27 the great deep encircles the earth.

Hengstenberg, Vol. II. p. 80, interprets the words of this verse, "Who stretched out the earth above, *i.e.* near to, and so as to stand over and overtop, the waters, and not be covered by them;" but this rendering does not seem to exhibit the force of the word translated "stretched out," which conveys the idea of stretching out as a crust or covering surface. It is also doubtful if the particle "above" (עַל) will bear the sense "near to" and "rising above," which this explanation demands.

7. *lights*] In Gen. i. 14—16, *luminaries*.

12. *With a strong hand*, &c.] Exod. xiii. 9, xv. 16, xxxii. 11; Deut. iv. 34, &c. *A strong hand* and *mighty arm* could alone rescue out of such perils.

13. *divided*] Emphatic: *divided*, so to say, *into pieces* or *parts* (in two parts, P. B. V.), instead of the expression used in Ex. xiv. 21, Ps. lxxviii. 13, "divided" or "parted."

15. *overthrew*] The same word as in Ex. xiv. 27, "shook off," "hurled," out of his chariot into the sea: the same word also is used, Ps. cix. 23, of locusts tossed about and floating upon the wind.

16. *To him which led*, &c.] Deut. viii. 15.

19—22. Compare Ps. cxxxv. 10—12, and the places quoted there from Deuteronomy.

heritage: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

22 *Even* an heritage unto Israel his servant: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

23 Who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

24 And hath redeemed us from our enemies: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

25 Who giveth food to all flesh: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

26 O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

PSALM CXXXVII.

1 *The constancy of the Jews in captivity.* 7 *The prophet curseth Edom and Babel.*

BY the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.

2 We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.

3 For there they that carried us away captive required of us †a song; and they that †wasted us *required of* us *mirth*, *saying*, Sing us one of the songs of Zion.

† Heb. *the words of a song.*

† Heb. *laid us on heaps.*

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22. *Israel his servant*] Deut. xxxii. 36.

If the four verses 19—22 were omitted, the psalm would consist of 22 verses, one for each letter of the alphabet; and the phraseology of the above-named verses in the original is such that they would seem not improbably taken from the preceding psalm.

23. *Who remembered us*, &c.] Allusion is made to God's deliverance of His people since ancient days spoken of above; it may be, to the escape from Babylon, the crowning deliverance of all.

25. *Who giveth*, &c.] See Pss. civ. 27, cxlv. 15, cxlvii. 9.

The P. B. V. of the psalm adds a 27th verse, which is not in the Hebrew, Syriac, or Greek, but is in the Vulg.

PSALM CXXXVII.

It is difficult to decide the precise date of this psalm. The title is absent in the Hebrew: in the LXX. it is "for David," τῷ Δαυίδ, Cod. Alex.; τῷ Δαυὶδ Ἰερεμίου, Cod. Vat., *i.e.* "of Jeremiah for David." The passion and mournfulness of it, and the absence of any allusion to Jerusalem restored, favour the opinion that it was written during the actual captivity; and the stern imprecations at the end are suitable to the times before Babylon was actually destroyed. On the other hand, the tenses in *vv.* 1, 2 rather point to the past: the epithet applied to Babylon in *v.* 8, literally taken, seems to imply that its destruction was accomplished; and the words, "*Happy* (shall he be)" or "Happy is the man," &c. may describe the accomplishment of prophecy as well as its anticipation.

Babylon was taken by Cyrus, B.C. 538: the Jews were allowed to return, B.C. 536. Babylon was destroyed by Darius Hystaspes (Herod. III. 159), B.C. 516; and about the same time the temple was rebuilt: see note on *v.* 8.

1. *By the rivers of Babylon, there*, &c.] *There* is emphatic: "By the rivers of the city of our oppressors, *there* we sat," &c. The country of Babylon was fruitful, Isai. xxxvi. 17, and well watered by rivers and canals. The rivers were, besides Euphrates and Tigris, Eulaos and Chaboras, upon whose banks Ezekiel (i. 3), and Daniel (viii. 2), saw visions. The captive Israelites sat by the cool streams for meditation and repose, and wept when they looked upon the mighty river and level plain through which it ran, so different from scenes at home, the mountains that stand about Jerusalem and Siloah's brook that flowed softly. They hung their harps upon the willows bordering the stream, Lev. xxiii. 40, Isai. xliv. 4, according to the word of the son of Sirach, xxii. 6, μουσικὰ ἐν πένθει ἄκαιρος διήγησις, that music is pastime unsuitable to sorrow. There does not seem any ground for supposing the Psalmist and his companions to be Levites or Priests: rather, the psalm is the lament of private persons.

2. *We hanged our harps*, &c.] We hung up our useless and tuneless harps upon the willows that grew everywhere in the land, out of reach and sight, lest the importunity of our oppressors should solicit us to cast aside sorrow and sing to them a song of Zion—one of those famed songs of Zion of which all the heathen had heard. How could we sing Jehovah's songs in a land of aliens?

The harp was used for joyful occasions, Gen. xxxi. 27; Isai. xxiv. 8; 1 Chro. xxv. 3. There seems no special force in the words "*in the midst thereof*;" they mean simply "in the land," and indicate the multitudes of willows. A particular willow, the weeping willow, is still called "Salix Babylonica;" see the 'Dictionary of the Bible' in v.

3. *they that wasted*, &c.] The Hebrew word (תוֹלְלֵינוּ) is obscure: LXX. οἱ ἀπαγαγόντες ἡμᾶς. The P. B. V. is hard to account for.

us mirth, *saying*, Sing us *one* of the songs of Zion.

4 How shall we sing the LORD'S song in a †strange land?

† Heb. *land of a stranger*

5 If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget *her cunning*.

6 If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above †my chief joy.

† Heb. *the head of my joy.*

7 Remember, O LORD, [a]the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, †Rase *it*, rase *it*, *even* to the foundation thereof.

[a] Obad. 10, &c.

† Heb. *Make bare.*

8 O daughter of Babylon, who art to be †destroyed; happy *shall he be*, †that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.

† Heb. *wasted.*

† Heb. *that recompenseth unto thee thy deed which thou didst to us.*

9 Happy *shall he be*, that taketh and [b]dasheth thy little ones against †the stones.

[b] Isai. 13. 16.

† Heb. *the rock.*

PSALM CXXXVIII.

1 *David praiseth God for the truth of his word.* 4 *He prophesieth that the kings of the earth shall praise God.* 7 *He professeth his confidence in God.*

A Psalm of David.

I WILL praise thee with my whole heart: [a]before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.

[a] Ps. 119. 46.

5, 6. *If I forget thee*, &c.] Heb. **may my right hand forget.**—The aposiopesis is emphatic: "May my right hand forget its cunning skill in striking the chords; may my tongue forget to sing, and cleave to my mouth; if I cease to prize Jerusalem above my chiefest joy; to desire its hallowed precincts above aught in life, or life itself."

7. *Remember, O LORD*, &c.] Remember, O Lord, to Edom's sorrow and discomfiture, that day (Ps. xxxvii. 13; Obad. 12, 13) of Jerusalem—that day of its visitation by Thee—when they, the kinsmen of Israel (Obad. 10, 12), aided and abetted the foe, and said, *Rase it, rase it*, &c., or, as marg., "Make bare." See Isai. xxxiv. 5; Lam. iv. 22, and Obadiah, for similar denunciations against Edom. See also Dean Stanley's 'Jewish Church,' II. pp. 556, 7.

8. *O daughter of Babylon*] A well-known periphrasis for Babylon, Isai. xlvii. 1; see also Isai. x. 32; Jer. xlvi. 11, &c.

who art to be destroyed] Rather, "who art destroyed." The rendering of Aq. προνενομευμένη, and that of the LXX. ἡ παλαίπωρος, seem to imply this meaning. The P.B.V. is "wasted with misery." A prophetical description probably of the future as accomplished: see Isai. xxi. 9, xxxiii. 1, and passim. The Psalmist, in these latter verses, puts himself in the midst of the desolated city, and singles out a circumstance of horror (Isai. xiv. 21; Hos. x. 14) that graphically paints the scene. Hupfeld and many others conceive that the Hebrew word, rendered above "destroyed," is to be referred to the partial destruction of Babylon under Cyrus; and the wish that follows to the complete destruction under Darius Hystaspes. The expression in this view is unpoetical: the wish for the utter destruction of the city already partially destroyed sounds exceedingly harsh; and it is not according to the manner of the psalms and of prophecy to draw fine distinctions between utter and partial destruction.

In explanation of these stern denunciations against Edom and Babylon we must recollect the customs of the day (2 K. viii. 12; Hos. xiii. 16, &c.; 'Il.' XXII. 63; XXIV. 732); further, that Babylon's destruction was the fulfilment of prophecy (Isai. xiii. 16—18, xxi. 9, xxxiii. 1, &c.); and that Babylon even in the Old Testament Scriptures assumes the character of a city opposed to God and to goodness (Isai. xiv. and passim). If the Psalmist had simply expressed a desire and longing for Babylon's destruction he would only have expressed what we meet with implicitly in the pages of all the prophets in that day. The particular expressions used sound terrible; but see also the remarks on Ps. cix. A Christian spirit must not be looked for throughout this ancient collection of the songs and psalms of a people warlike, fierce, and hardly tried as the Jews: it is truly remarkable that among so many psalms of various authors and of all ages only a few words here and there grate harshly upon the sentiments of Christians!

PSALM CXXXVIII.

A psalm praising Jehovah for His mercy shewn, upon some special occasion, by His reply to prayer, and performance of His promises beyond expectation, *vv.* 1—3: prophesying that all the realms of the earth, on hearing of it, would celebrate His glorious deeds, and worship, *v.* 4: ending with a confident expression of trust in His continued protection, *v.* 7, and prayer for the completion of His work of grace, *v.* 8.

The inscription assigns the psalm to David, and its spirit and manner, generally, fall in with

2 I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.

3 In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, *and* strengthenedst me *with* strength in my soul.

4 All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O LORD, when they hear the words of thy mouth.

5 Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD: for great *is* the glory of the LORD.

6 Though the LORD *be* high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off.

7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.

8 The LORD will perfect *that which* concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD,

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the inscription. It may have been written when he ascended the throne after the death of Saul, and after his escape from innumerable perils, in connection, Delitzsch imagines, with Jehovah's promises, 2 S. vii., of which many expressions in the psalm remind us. The connection between this psalm (see *v.* 6) and the next is manifest.

1. *before the gods*] Some (LXX., Luther, Calvin, &c.) interpret these words of the angels, and compare Ps. xxix. 1; but it is doubtful if the Hebrew word, Elohim, used nakedly and without any explanation, can have this meaning: it is also, as it would seem, in this connection, pointless: others (Rabbins, Flamin., Delitzsch, &c.) interpret "the great ones of the earth," and compare verse 4 below, and Pss. lxxxii. 1, cxix. 46, &c., but this interpretation, too, seems to give no special force to the passage. Probably (Aq., Symm., Jer., &c.) the meaning is, "Before, or, in presence of, the gods of the heathen, *i.e.* in scorn of, in sight of, the idols, who can do nothing, I will praise Jehovah, who does miracles for me and His people." For a similar expression, see Ps. xxiii. 5, Heb.: see also Pss. xcv. 3, xcvi. 5, for places in which the Hebrew word "gods" is used probably for idols.

2. *I will worship*, &c.] If David wrote the psalm he must use the word *temple* for the earlier simple sanctuary on Zion; see Ps. v. 7, and note. "I will worship," he says, "turning towards Thy sanctuary in which Thine ark abides." See 1 K. viii. 48.

for thou hast magnified, &c.] *i.e.* "Thou hast performed Thy promise above that which Thy Name and Fame as a faithful performer of promises led us to expect and to hope." A special promise and its abundant fulfilment seem referred to.

3. *In the day*, &c.] The genuine confidence of David: compare his humility, *v.* 6.

4. *All the kings*, &c.] Hiram king of Tyre (2 S. v. 11; 1 Chro. xiv. 1), and Toi king of Hamath (2 S. viii. 10), congratulated David upon his accession, and are supposed to be here chiefly intended. But doubtless all the kings of the earth are meant; they all shall praise Thee when they hear the "*words of thy mouth*," *i.e.* Thy promises made to David and to Thy people and fulfilled literally and above the letter, *v.* 2: compare Pss. lxviii. 29, cii. 15, cxlviii. 11, &c. In Isai. xlix. 7, lii. 15, lx. 3, are somewhat similar prophetical idealizations of kings and peoples worshipping Jehovah or His Christ. It is to be noticed that He to whom the psalm is addressed is not named till verse 4. See Ps. cxiv.

5. *Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD*] *i.e.* "of the ways" or "doings," Ps. ciii. 7, "of the Lord." Similar expressions, Heb., occur Pss. lxxxvii. 3, cv. 2.

6. *Though the LORD*, &c.] Similar words of David occur 2 S. vi. 21, xxiii. 1; Pss. xviii. 28, 29, cxiii. 5, cxxxi. 1: see too Prov. xvi. 18. The next clause is obscure. "As for the proud" (see Ps. ci. 5), "He knoweth," *i.e.* notices, observes, sees them (Ps. xciv. 11; Jer. xxix. 23), though He is "afar off" in heaven, cf. Ps. cxxxix. 2, His place of dwelling.

7. *Though I walk*, &c.] See Ps. xxiii. 4.

thou wilt revive me] See Ps. lxxi. 20; and cxix. passim.

thou shalt stretch forth, &c.] See 1 S. xxiv. 6; Ps. x. 12; Job i. 12.

against the wrath, &c.] *i.e.* "against my wrathful furious enemies."

8. *will perfect*, &c.] "Will complete and fully execute all that is to be done for me within and without."

the works of thine own hands] The creatures which Thou hast made with Thine hands and Thy fingers, Ps. viii., and specially those whom Thou hast singled out from the whole world, and set apart, and made near to Thyself. See Ps. xcii. 4, 5; also 2 S. vii. 25.

endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands.

PSALM CXXXIX.

1 *David praiseth God for his allseeing providence,* 17 *and for his infinite mercies.* 19 *He defieth the wicked.* 23 *He prayeth for sincerity.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known *me*.

2 Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.

3 Thou [1]compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted *with* all my ways.

[1] Or, *winnowest.*

4 For *there is* not a word in my tongue, *but*, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.

5 Thou hast beset me behind and

PSALM CXXXIX.

The inscription assigns this psalm to David; its wonderful spirit, originality, majesty, and its correspondence with psalms undoubtedly Davidic, support the authority of the title. Many commentators (Delitzsch, &c.), on account of certain Chaldee words and phrases in it, imagine it written after the captivity, and interpret the inscription as indicating that the psalm is worthy of the great king and like his (other) compositions. The argument from the occurrence of Chaldee phrases is not very convincing, unless it can be shewn that such phrases were certainly introduced into the Hebrew language after the captivity. The writer of this psalm must have been gifted, almost above all the sons of men, with poetic genius, as well as with divinely inspired insight. An age of strong faith seems most likely to have produced such a strain; rather than a time of decline, and of the deterioration of taste and of the spirit of a people. The early part of the psalm describes God's omniscience, *vv.* 1—6; His omnipresence and omnipotence are described, *vv.* 7—12; the latter as exhibited in the wondrous formation of man (*vv.* 13—16). The Psalmist's deep delight at the constant study of God's thoughts (*vv.* 17, 18); his horror of the wicked who use such a Name for crime (*vv.* 19—22). Earnest prayer is offered (*vv.* 23, 24), that God the searcher of hearts would search his heart, lighten his eye, and direct him to life eternal, to the end. "Language," says Herder, 'Sermons,' Vol. IV. p. 69, "utterly fails me in the exposition of this psalm. Let any one read it, and he will see that, after the fullest explanation of every verse and of the purport of the whole, the psalm is at each reading new; each word suggestive perpetually of new thoughts."

The Alexandrian copy of the LXX. seems to attribute this psalm to Zacharias in the day of captivity. But the words perhaps mean that Zacharias in his captivity soothed himself with the study of this psalm; and good authorities attribute the reference to Zacharias in the inscription to a later hand.

1. *thou hast searched*, &c.] Lit. "Oh Lord, Thou hast searched me and knowest." Thou hast searched out and knowest (all that relates to me, body, soul, and spirit) as a man fully knows that which he has long and carefully studied! The past tense has the force of past and present.

2. *Thou*] Emphatic, "Thou and none beside." *Downsitting* opposed to *uprising* seems to mean "resting," *i.e.* at night from work. The use of the same Hebrew words in Ps. cxxvii. 2 suggests this interpretation.

afar off] Does this mean "afar off and out of heaven thy dwelling-place," an image common in Scripture (Ps. cxxxviii. 6; Jer. xxiii. 23, and fully expressed in Ps. xxxiii. 13—15)? or "afar off and before conceived of the brain, and long long before uttered of the tongue!" The latter idea is the more exquisite; and most suited to this psalm, which stays not at the surface, but expresses the deepest depths of divine truth for which the words of the writer scarcely suffice. The thought just born, and in time far removed from utterance, is viewed as at a distance, and seen in its earliest birth, afar off, by God.

3. *Thou compassest*, &c.] *i.e.* "surroundest and dost fence in, so that nothing can escape the vigilant eye that watches the fenced path:" or, rather, as in the margin, "winnowest," *i.e.* "dost examine," "sift," and "thoroughly understand;" a metaphor from a winnower who separates minutest atoms of chaff from the corn.

acquainted] *i.e.* "thoroughly," as "by long custom and perpetual consideration of them." See the use of the word הסכנתי in Num. xxii. 30.

4. *there is not a word*, &c.] "The instant a thought is conceived in the brain and before the tongue has begun to be stirred up to utter it aloud, Thou knowest it thoroughly! How much more my ways and words and deeds!"

5. *Thou hast beset*, &c.] "I cannot move to right or left or forwards or backwards without Thy permission;" "Thine hand is laid upon me always and holds me with force invisible but irresistible;" see Job iii. 23, and xiii. 21, 27. These palpable images paint God as He is, always close to us, always directing, always restraining.

before, and laid thine hand upon me.

6 *Such* knowledge *is* too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot *attain* unto it.

7 Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

[a] Amos 9. 2, 3, 4. 8 [a]If I ascend up into heaven, thou *art* there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou *art there.*

9 *If* I take the wings of the morning, *and* dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

10 Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

11 If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall

[b] Job 26. 6. Heb. 4. 13. † Heb. *darkeneth not.* be light about me.

12 Yea, [b]the darkness †hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: †the darkness and the light *are* both alike *to thee.*

† Heb. *as is the darkness, so is the light.*

13 For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.

14 I will praise thee; for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made: marvellous *are* thy works; and *that* my soul knoweth †right well.

† Heb. *greatly.*

15 My ‖substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, *and* curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.

‖ Or, *strength, or, body.*

16 Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book †all *my members* were written, ‖*which* in continuance were fashioned, when *as yet there was* none of them.

† Heb. *all of them.* ‖ Or, what *days they should be fashioned.*

17 [c]How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!

[c] Ps. 40. 5.

18 *If* I should count them, they

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6. *Such knowledge*, &c.] With these words ends the description of God's omniscience; in the next *vv.* His omnipresence and omnipotence are painted.

7. *Whither shall I go*, &c.] The exclamation in the text is not suggestive of terror; but of awe and wonder, as of a feeble helpless creature, in proximity always to closely-encompassing, irresistible, intelligence and might!

8. *hell*] The deepest recesses of Hades under the earth are contrasted with heaven: Heb. "if I should make Hades my resting-place."

9. *the wings of the morning*] The morning light is figured with wings which carry it in a moment from the east to the utmost parts of the west. The wind has wings, Ps. xviii. 10: the sun, Mal. iv. 2.

10. *lead me*, &c.] "Beyond the sea and far out of sight of man, Thy hand will lead and Thy right hand will hold me, so that I cannot escape!"

11. *If I say*, &c.] "If I say, Darkness will cover me, and night shall be light (or instead of light) around me—Yea, the darkness," &c.: *v.* 12 is the reply to *v.* 11, as *v.* 10 to *v.* 9.

13. *possessed*] The Hebrew word will bear the meaning "formed," *i.e.* "created:" "as Thou didst form and fashion, so surely Thou dost know completely and comprehend, the constitution of my reins and secret hidden parts." The reins are mentioned perhaps as the seat of tenderest feeling and sentiment.

covered me] *i.e.* "clothed and protected me with flesh, bones, skin, &c., a covering inimitable by art," Job x. 11: or, rather, "woven with curious skill and interlacing of bones, sinews, veins, &c. like an elaborate curious garment."

14. *my soul knoweth*, &c.] *i.e.* "that Thy works are fearfully wonderful."

15. *curiously wrought*] "As an embroidered garment, diversified with colours (Exod. xxvi. 36), my substance was curiously and artistically (yea with art inimitable) wrought in the utter darkness of the womb." The phrase "lowest parts of the earth" seems to express a chamber of utter darkness out of reach of the eye of man or light of God.

16. *Thine eyes*, &c.] "Thine eyes saw me, in the womb, an embryo, an atom, unformed (glomus), invisible to any other ken; and in Thy book (Ps. lvi. 8; Mal. iii. 16) were *they* all written: *my days* were fashioned and delineated in Thy Spirit and written in Thy book, when as yet not one of them was." "My members" is not in the original; the A. V. must be altered as above to express a sense which Job x. 5—11 illustrates.

17. *How precious*, &c.] "How dear to me are Thy wondrous thoughts displayed in these miracles of creation! how I delight to dwell upon them! how great and awful is the sum of them! If I count, they are more in

are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee.

19 Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: depart from me therefore, ye bloody men.

20 For they speak against thee wickedly, *and* thine enemies take *thy name* in vain.

21 Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee?

22 I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies.

23 Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:

24 And see if *there be any* †wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

† Heb. *way of pain*, or *grief*.

PSALM CXL.

1 *David prayeth to be delivered from Saul and Doeg.* 8 *He prayeth against them.* 12 *He comforteth himself by confidence in God.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

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number than the sand: I count them all the day long till sleep overtakes me; I sleep and wake from sleep and am still with Thee, still counting the endless tale of Thy thoughts, Thy wondrous designs of art and wisdom displayed in man!" Others explain, "How incomprehensible are Thy thoughts!" referring to Dan. ii. 11 for this interpretation of the word (יקרו) of dubious import. But the interpretation first given is the more refined: and the second introduces a repetition of the sentiment of *v.* 6.

19. *Surely thou*, &c.] Or, "Oh that Thou wouldest slay," &c. The transition from the contemplation of God in His works to the mention of His enemies recals Ps. civ. 35. The exquisite meditations upon God's attributes in this psalm may also have been suggested by sharp trial caused by the enemies of God: of the nature of it no hint is given.

20. *For they speak against thee*, &c.] The import of the text as it stands would seem to be, "They speak of Thee with evil purpose; and take in vain Thy Name (Exod. xx. 7), (being) Thine enemies." The words seem to convey the idea that the impious men alluded to were in the strict sense God's enemies and revilers of God. The renderings of the LXX. and Vulg. of this *v.* are very different. Symmachus renders the latter clause *ἐπήρθησαν ματαίως οἱ ἐναντίοι σου, i.e.* "Thine enemies, in vain, are risen up against Thee," which may be the true rendering. Chrysostom, Comm. on 1 Cor. xiii., remarks upon this verse and the next, "That now a higher philosophy is required of us than of these men, for they are ordered to hate not only impiety but impious persons, lest their friendship should be an occasion to them of going astray, &c." The remark seems needless in explanation of this place. The spirit of Christianity scarcely enjoins us to love the enemies of God: and the expression of the Psalmist conveys the idea rather of the Psalmist's hatred of impiety in the abstract than of particular impious men. So Hengstenberg, Vol. IV. p. 114, remarks, "The Psalmist speaks of wicked men as such, not of his own enemies as wicked men." It is totally adverse to the spirit of Christianity to look upon our enemies in the light of God's enemies, as the Jews were sometimes prone to do: but of this spirit not a trace appears in the psalm.

21. *grieved*] Rather, "sorely grieved and horror-stricken."

22. *I count them mine enemies*] "But my hatred of them is as Thine enemies."

23. *Search me*, &c.] A prayer that God would search him out and see if aught in his own spirit is displeasing to Him; vouchsafe him light to find the right path and strength to walk in it. The word (עצב) rendered "any wicked way" means either (marg.) "way of pain or grief," or "way of idols." The latter interpretation is too elliptical; the meaning of the other is paraphrased above. The "*way everlasting*," *i.e.* the safe, secure, divine way (Psalm i. 6), which leads to everlasting prosperity. Böttcher declares these latter verses unworthy of the rest of the psalm and added by a later hand: others (Luther, Delitzsch, &c.) feel that the psalm would be imperfect without them; and that they are the very point to which it tends from the beginning. Hatred and abhorrence of the impiety which disowns or despises Him, Whom the Psalmist feels to be omnipresent, omniscient, all good, is the almost inevitable fruit of the intense realization of His perfections which this psalm discovers: and a prayer to Him Who knows the heart that He would move the spirit of the singer to his greatest good, is so natural and appropriate, that no fitter conclusion could be imagined.

PSALM CXL.

A prayer for divine aid against enemies powerful and slanderous, who stir up daily strife, and surround the Psalmist with snares

DELIVER me, O LORD, from the evil man: preserve me from the †violent man;

2 Which imagine mischiefs in *their* heart; continually are they gathered together *for* war.

3 They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; [a]adders' poison *is* under their lips. Selah.

4 Keep me, O LORD, from the hands of the wicked; preserve me from the violent man; who have purposed to overthrow my goings.

5 The proud have hid a snare for me, and cords; they have spread a net by the wayside; they have set gins for me. Selah.

6 I said unto the LORD, Thou *art* my God: hear the voice of my supplications, O LORD.

7 O GOD the Lord, the strength of my salvation, thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.

8 Grant not, O LORD, the desires of the wicked: further not his wicked device; ‖*lest* they exalt themselves. Selah.

9 *As for* the head of those that compass me about, let the mischief of their own lips cover them.

‖ Or, *let them* not *be exalted.*

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and nets, *vv.* 2—6: whose schemes, nevertheless, will come to nought through God's aid often experienced before, *vv.* 7—9; when the heads of the plots imagined against the Psalmist will be punished according to their deserving, by a Righteous Judge Who regards the upright, *vv.* 12, 13.

There is a close resemblance between this psalm and Pss. lviii., lxiv.: also between it and the following Pss. cxli., cxlii., cxliii., of which the author may be the same. It contains many uncommon words and phrases, *e.g.* in *vv.* 2, 8, and its manner is wholly Davidical. A common opinion is, that it was composed by David with reference to the machinations of Doeg and other slanderous persons in the time of Saul, 1 S. xxii. 9, xxiii. 19, &c. Others, Rudinger, Delitzsch, &c., think that Ahithophel is referred to, and the date of the psalm the flight before Absalom. The Syr. adds to the title, "when Saul cast the javelin against David."

1. *from the evil man*] The singular is used collectively; "from evil men." See *vv.* 4, 8.

preserve me] Or, "Thou wilt preserve me." The tense is changed, and may express either a prayer or confident hope of aid.

2. *Which imagine*, &c.] The plural in this verse shews that the sing in the verse preceding is used collectively.

are they gathered together for war] The meaning is rather, "stir up," "excite," war: see Deut. ii. 5. 9, 24, orig.; Prov. xv. 18. So the Syr., Chald., Hupfeld, Delitzsch, &c. LXX. παρετάσσοντο πολέμους, and so Vulg.

3. *They have sharpened*, &c.] Like a sharp arrow; see Ps. cxx. 4: or, as a serpent's tongue, quick, agile, pointed, is sharpened for a stroke. See Pss. x. 7, lv. 21, lxiv. 3.

adders' poison is under their lips] Cf. the expression, S. of S. iv. 11: also Ps. lviii. 4.

4. *Keep me, O LORD*, &c.] The second clause of the first versicle of this *v.* is the same as the second versicle of *v.* 1, which seems the burden of the song.

to overthrow my goings] See Pss. xxxv. 6 (note), lviii. 10. The meaning is, "to direct my steps, or feet, to ruin."

5. *The proud have hid*, &c.] The artifices of the Psalmist's enemies are compared to the stratagems by which hunters entrap their prey. Similar images Pss. ix. 16, xxxi. 4, cxlii. 3, &c.

by the wayside] *i.e.* "by the way in which I am to go," Pss. xxiii. 3, cxlii. 3. See too, 1 S. xxiii. 23, the words of Saul to the Ziphites, to which, possibly, allusion is made. The tenses in the orig. have the force of past and present, see *v.* 2.

7. *the strength of my salvation*] Or, "of my deliverance," *i.e.* "my strong Deliverer." *Thou hast covered*, and wilt surely cover in time to come like a helmet, *my head.* Eph. vi. 17; 1 Thess. v. 8.

the day of battle] LXX. πολέμου, Vulg. "belli:" properly, "preparation for battle."

8. *Grant not, O LORD, the desires*, &c.] *i.e.* to take and destroy me. The word rendered "desires" occurs only in this place. The LXX. render μὴ παραδῷς με, Κύριε, ἀπὸ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας μου ἁμαρτωλῷ. They may have read מאותי. The word "wicked device" occurs also only here.

lest they exalt, &c.] Or, "they exalt themselves," a separate versicle, after David's manner.

9. *As for the head of those*, &c.] There are various interpretations of this verse, according to the meaning attributed to *head.* Moll interprets as "the chiefs, or leaders;" others (which seems best), "the head," *i.e.* "the life," of those that encompass me about.

let the mischief] *i.e.* "Let the mischievous work of their own lips fall, as some heavy weight, upon them (the word "head" or "life"

10 Let burning coals fall upon them: let them be cast into the fire; into deep pits, that they rise not up again.

† Heb. *a man of tongue.* ‖ Or, *an evil speaker, a wicked man of violence, be established in the earth: let him be hunted to his overthrow.*

11 Let not ‖ †an evil speaker be established in the earth: evil shall hunt the violent man to overthrow *him.*

12 I know that the LORD will maintain the cause of the afflicted, *and* the right of the poor.

13 Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name: the upright shall dwell in thy presence.

PSALM CXLI.

1 *David prayeth that his suit may be acceptable,* 3 *his conscience sincere,* 7 *and his life safe from snares.*

A Psalm of David.

LORD, I cry unto thee: make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee.

† Heb. *directed*

2 Let my prayer be †set forth be-

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in the Heb. implying the plur.) and destroy them; let the calumnies which they heap upon me fall upon and cover themselves;" cf. Ps. vii. 16.

10. *Let burning coals fall*, &c.] *Fall;* or, rather, be "dropped" or "hurled" as hail from above. But this is the rendering of the Keri or marginal reading: the reading in the text of the Heb. Bible would give, "Let them drop or hurl burning coals," &c., cf. Ps. lv. 3: *burning coals*, Ps. xviii. 13, 14, see note.

let them be cast, &c.] Heb. "Let Him, *i.e.* God, cast them or cause them to go into." The LXX. interpret ἐν πυρὶ καταβαλεῖ αὐτούς, *i. e.* igne, seu fulmine, dejiciet eos: and similarly Luther and others. But it is better to interpret "fire," "burning coals," and "deep pits," as symbolic of various perils; see Ps. lxvi. 12. The word rendered *deep pits* occurs only here. The interpretation is from the Rabbins: Symm., Targ., βοθύνους. The LXX. render ἐν ταλαιπωρίαις. The Syr. omits the word: Perowne, from the Arab., interprets "floods of water."

that they rise not up again] Ps. xxxvi. 12; Isai. xiv. 21, xxvi. 14.

11. *Let not an evil speaker*] Heb. "a man of tongue;" *i.e.* a calumnious tongue. See Job xiii. 7; Ps. ci. 5; Ecclus. viii. 4. Some imagine Doeg to be intended: but it is better to suppose the word used for a class.

established in the earth] "Shall have no settled dwelling; shall be driven from the haunts of men:" Pss. ci. 7, cii. 28.

evil shall hunt, &c.] "As for the violent man, calamity, corresponding to his wrong-doing, shall hunt and find him out (as a beast, or bird) to ruin (Heb. "ruins," ἅπαξ λεγ., *i.e.* one ruin after another)." So LXX., Vulg., &c. The violent man and the calumnious tongue point to the same person.

13. *shall dwell in thy presence*] *i.e.* under Thy protection, as children under that of parents. Ps. xvi. 11.

PSALM CXLI.

This psalm is entitled a Psalm of David, and the contents do not seem to be inconsistent with the correctness of the inscription. It is true that its early date has been called in question on account of its involved style and the obscurity of a portion of its contents, but it is equally true that its originality may be defended on almost the same grounds.

The common opinion of those who assign the psalm to David is, that it was composed during the time of his persecution by Saul. (Cf. 1 S. xxiv. 2.) Delitzsch, who thinks it probable that the psalm was written in imitation of David's style, assigns as its historical ground the flight before Absalom, and the temporary exclusion of David from the worship of the sanctuary; and he sees in it an anticipation of the time when the new rulers should become a prey to the indignation of the people, and the people should be restored to their rightful allegiance to their king. The points of connection (see Note 1 at end, and int. to Pss. cxl., cxlii.) with Ps. cxl. and with the following psalms seem to warrant the inference that they were composed at the same time, and by the same writer.

The beginning and the end of the psalm are tolerably clear, but the middle of it is involved in great obscurity, partly by reason of the ambiguity of the expressions, and partly by reason of our ignorance of the circumstances under which the psalm was composed.

1. *I cry unto thee*] Lit. "I have called upon Thee."

make haste unto me] David generally, if not invariably, adds "for my help" (cf. Pss. xxii. 19, xxxviii. 22, xl. 13), but in Ps. lxx. 1, 5 (which is a composite psalm, and perhaps from the hand of a later writer; see note) both forms occur.

2. *Let my prayer be set forth*] The same verb is used in 2 Chro. xxix. 35 and xxxv. 10, 16, of the sacrificial service of the temple.

as incense] Lit. "incense." Cf. Ps. xi. 1 for the omission of the particle of comparison. The offering of incense appears to have accompanied that of the morning and evening sacrifice (see Exod. xxx. 7, 8 and note in loc.), and the rising of the smoke of the incense seems

fore thee *as* incense; *and* the lifting up of my hands *as* the evening sacrifice.

3 Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.

Or, *Let the righteous smite me kindly, and reprove me; let not* their *precious oil break my head,* &c.

4 Incline not my heart to *any* evil thing, to practise wicked works with men that work iniquity: and let me not eat of their dainties.

5 [1]Let the righteous smite me; *it shall be* a kindness: and let him reprove me; *it shall be* an excellent oil, *which* shall not break my head: for yet my prayer also *shall be* in their calamities.

6 When their judges are overthrown in stony places, they shall hear my words; for they are sweet.

7 Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth *wood* upon the earth.

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to have been symbolical of the ascent to heaven of the prayers of the worshippers (cf. Luke i. 10; Rev. v. 8, viii. 3, 4). The Psalmist prays that whilst debarred from the appointed services of the tabernacle (or temple), his prayer may rise with acceptance before God, like the cloud of incense, and may prove as acceptable in His sight as the sacrifices of the sanctuary. Cf. Ps. v. 3, and note in loc., also li. 17. The parallelism shews that the "lifting up of the hands" in the second clause of the verse is equivalent to the "prayer" of the first clause (cf. Ps. xxviii. 2 and note, lxiii. 4, cxxxiv. 2). The word rendered "sacrifice" is in the Heb. *minchah*, but as it seems here to denote the whole of the evening sacrifice, *i.e.* the lamb together with the flour and oil (Exod. xxix. 40, 41; Num. xxviii. 5, 8), it is rightly so rendered. Cf. 2 K. xvi. 15; Dan. ix. 21. It is probably used in this place because it has the same signification as that which is rendered "lifting up," viz. a *gift*.

3. *Set a watch*] See Note 2 at end. The Psalmist had need of special watchfulness over his tongue, lest he should be betrayed into the use of rash and unguarded language (cf. Pss. xxxiv. 13, xxxviii. 13, xxxix. 1).

keep the door of my lips] Cf. Micah vii. 5, "keep the doors (or openings) of thy mouth;" also Eurip. *πύλαι στόματος* and Homer ('Il.' IV. 350; 'Od.' I. 64, &c.) *ἕρκος ὀδόντων*. In Egyptian the same word denotes both *door* and *mouth*. Cf. Deut. viii. 3; Ps. lxxxix. 34.

4. *evil thing*] Cf. Ps. lxiv. 5; Eccles. viii. 5; and, as the opposite to this, Ps. xlv. 1, "a good matter."

with men that work iniquity] A peculiar form of the Heb. plural for "men" is here used which is found elsewhere only in Prov. viii. 4 and Isai. liii. 3. The word denotes *great men, men of rank* or *renown*. The word translated "practise" occurs in the same form in no other place, nor is the word translated "dainties" used elsewhere.

5. *Let the righteous smite me*, &c.] This verse is extremely obscure. The first clause may be rendered thus, "(If) a righteous man smite me, it shall be a kindness (Vulg. "beneficium erit"); and if he rebuke me, (such) oil for the head let it not (*i.e.* the head) refuse." The meaning seems to be that the reproofs of a friend would be taken, as designed, in good part, and neither resented, nor deemed occasion for mourning. Cf. Lev. xix. 17, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart: thou shalt in any wise reprove thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him." See Note 3 at end. The literal rendering of the second clause is, "for yet, and my prayer (shall be) in (or against) their evil deeds." The meaning probably is, "I will continue to encounter the evil deeds of my adversaries with no other weapon than prayer." Cf. Ps. cix. 4, 28.

6. *When their judges*, &c.] This and the following verse are equally, or yet more obscure. The "judges," or princes (for the word is applicable to rulers in general), may be identical with the "great men" of *v.* 4. The verb rendered "overthrown" (or more literally "cast-down") is in the past tense, which is probably, here, as elsewhere, expressive of the certainty of the doom foretold. The verse may be translated thus: "Their rulers (or leaders) are cast down (*i.e.* shall certainly be cast down, and are already beheld by the Psalmist as cast down) by the sides of the rock; and they (*i.e.* the people) shall hear my words, for they are sweet." LXX. *Κατεπόθησαν ἐχόμενα πέτρας οἱ κριταὶ αὐτῶν*. Jerome translates, "Sublati sunt juxta petram judices eorum." Prayer-Book Version, "Let their judges be overthrown in stony places." The verb rendered "overthrown" is used of Jezebel in 2 K. ix. 33, "Throw her down. So they threw her down." It deserves notice that the word rendered "dainties" in *v.* 4 is cognate to the word rendered "are sweet" in this verse.

7. *Our bones are scattered*, &c.] The obscurity of this psalm here reaches its culminating point, and it appears impossible to ascertain the meaning with certainty. It may be as follows, "Just as when one furrows and cuts into (or breaks up) the earth (with a view of scattering seed in it), so (*i.e.* in the purpose of the Psalmist's adversaries) our bones are scattered at the mouth of the grave." The introduction of the word "wood" into

8 But mine eyes *are* unto thee, O GOD the Lord: in thee is my trust; †leave not my soul destitute.

9 Keep me from the snares *which* they have laid for me, and the gins of the workers of iniquity.

10 Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst that I withal †escape.

† Heb. *make not my soul bare.*

† Heb *pass over*

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the A. V. needlessly involves and obscures the drift of the passage. In support of the interpretation given above, it may be observed, (1) that it is in entire harmony with the verses which follow, in which the Psalmist prays or predicts that his enemies may or will fall into the very snares which they had laid for himself and his people; (2) that the word rendered "cleaveth" is the same word which is used in 2 Chro. xxv. 12 of the inhabitants of Seir who were thrown from the rock and "broken in pieces;" and (3) that the two past tenses "were overthrown," *v.* 6, and "were scattered," *v.* 7, are thus consistently interpreted. The meaning of the whole would be as follows: In spite of the continued machinations of his adversaries and rebukes of his friends, the Psalmist expresses his determination in *v.* 5 to have recourse to no other weapon than prayer. In *vv.* 6 and 7 he expresses his full conviction that although it was the design of his enemies to destroy himself and his followers, and to scatter their bones, nevertheless God, in His righteous providence, would so defeat their counsels and turn them against themselves, that they should perish by a destruction similar to that which they had prepared for him, whilst he, whose eyes had been ever fixed upon the Lord, should entirely escape. It must not be overlooked that the figurative language here employed occurs in other passages, either separately or combined, as *e.g.* in Jer. l. 17, where Israel is described as "a scattered sheep" (the same word used in *v.* 7, "our bones are scattered"); and in the same verse it is declared that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had "broken his bones." The same word occurs again Ps. liii. 5, "God hath scattered the bones of him that encamped against thee."

8. *But mine eyes*, &c.] Or, "For mine eyes," &c. This expression of the ground of the Psalmist's confidence seems to refer back to *v.* 6. Cf. Ps. xxv. 15. The language of the psalm from this verse is simple and analogous to that of the earlier psalms.

leave not my soul destitute] Or, "pour not out my soul," *i.e.* unto death. Vulg. "ne effundas." Cf. Isai. liii. 12, "He hath poured out His soul unto death."

9. *Keep me*] The word "keep" seems to look back to *v.* 3, where a cognate noun, or, as some think, the same verb, is used. See Note 2 at end.

from the snares] Lit. "from the hands of the snare," in reference probably to *v.* 6, "stony places," which is literally *the hands of the rock.* Cf. Ps. cxl. 5.

10. *into their own nets*] The word rendered "nets" occurs only in this place, as the closely corresponding word in Ps. cxl. 10, which is rendered "deep pits," occurs there only. It seems not improbable that the same word stood originally in the text in both places, and should be rendered *pits* in both. Cf. Ps. xxxv. 7, where, according to the A. V. (but see note in loc.), the net which is to catch the adversaries was digged by them *in a pit* for the Psalmist. Cf. Pss. vii. 16, lvii. 6; Prov. xxvi. 27, xxviii. 10.

whilst that I withal escape] Rather, "whilst I pass over (*i.e.* in safety) at the same time." Cf. Ps. iv. 8, and note in loc. Jerome has "simul autem ego transibo." The pronoun is emphatic.

NOTES on PSALM CXLI.

1. Amongst the points of connection with the preceding psalm, we may compare:

(1) האזינה קולי, *v.* 1, with cxl. 6.
(2) *v.* 3. ,, איש לשון, cxl. 11.
(3) שמרה, *v.* 3. and שמרני, *v.* 9. ,, cxl. 4.
(4) נצרה, *v.* 3. ,, cxl. 1, 4.
(5) יהוה אדני, *v.* 8. ,, cxl. 7.
(6) פח, *v.* 9. ,, cxl. 5.
(7) יקשו and כוקשות, *v.* 9. ,, cxl. 5.
(8) יפלו במכמריו, *v.* 10, with יכילם בהמרות, cxl. 10.

2. שְׁמָרָה as a noun is *d.* λ. As the imperative with ה paragog., it occurs three times, viz. 1 Chro. xxix. 18; Ps. xxv. 20; and Ps. lxxxvi. 2. It has been supposed that the Psalmist has omitted the noun after שיתה and that שמרה like נצרה should be taken as an imperative. The rendering would then be, "Set, O Lord, a watch, or a muzzle (משמר, or מחסום as in Ps. xxxix. 1), upon my mouth." Others take נצרה as a noun, and render the verse thus; "Set, O Lord, a watch before my mouth, a guard upon the door of my lips." Thus the LXX.: Θοῦ,

Κύριε, φυλακὴν τῷ στόματί μου, καὶ θύραν περιοχῆς περὶ τὰ χείλη μου. נְצֹרָה may be Imp. Kal. with *dag. dirimens* as Prov. iv. 13.

3. Thirty-six MSS. read יִנְיָא instead of יִנִּי. The LXX. read ἔλαιον δὲ ἁμαρτωλοῦ μὴ λιπανάτω τὴν κεφαλήν μου. Jerome translates: "oleum amaritudinis non impinguet caput meum."

PSALM CXLII.

David sheweth that in his trouble all his comfort was in prayer unto God.

‖ Or, A Psalm *of David, giving instruction.*

‖ Maschil of David; A Prayer when he was in the cave.

I CRIED unto the LORD with my voice; with my voice unto the LORD did I make my supplication.

2 I poured out my complaint before him; I shewed before him my trouble.

3 When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path. In the way wherein I walked ‖ Or, *Look on the right hand, and see.* have they privily laid a snare for me.

4 ‖ I looked on *my* right hand, and

PSALM CXLII.

This psalm, which is the last which bears a title referring to the persecutions of Saul, is supposed, like the lviith, to describe David's emotions and supplications in the cave of Adullam, or of Engedi. The similarity of tone between this and the psalms of the earlier books is noticed by Hupfeld.

The allusion in *v.* 3 to the snare privily laid for the Psalmist by his enemies connects this psalm with *vv.* 9, 10 of the preceding, and both with Ps. lvii. 6, possibly also with 1 S. xxiv. 11. Cf. also Ps. cxl. 5.

The psalm is expressive of the deepest sense of danger and of desertion, amounting almost to despair. But a conviction of the utter hopelessness of his condition, so far as human succour was concerned, serves to excite within the breast of the Psalmist a determination to trust more implicitly and more exclusively in God. This resolution, as in other psalms of a similar character, converts his valley of Achor into a door of hope; and the psalm ends with a bright description of a morning of gladness succeeding to a night of sorrow. The writer anticipates, moreover, the joy and gratitude with which the righteous would hail his deliverance.

1. *I cried*] Rather, "I cry."
with my voice] See on Ps. iii. 4.
did I make, &c.] Rather, "I make supplication." This and the following verses agree very closely with the beginning of Ps. lxxvii. See notes in loc.

2. *I poured out*, &c.] Rather, "I pour out, ...I make known." Cf. the title of Ps. cii. with this and the next verse.

3. *was overwhelmed*] Rather, "is overwhelmed," lit. "veils itself," or "is darkened." See note on Ps. lxxvii. 3. The verb in this form occurs also in Pss. lxxvii. 3 (ascribed to Asaph), cvii. 5 (anon.), and cxliii. 4, ascribed to David: elsewhere only in Jonah ii. 8, and Lam. ii. 12.

then thou knewest my path] Lit. "and Thou." The pronoun is emphatic. Cf. 1 K. viii. 32, 34, 36, 39, for a similar use of the personal pronoun with the copula. It is not improbable, however, that the existing arrangement of the text is faulty, and that the clause, "when my spirit was overwhelmed," &c., belongs to the preceding verse. In this case the copula may be rendered by "but," instead of "then." As in the first verse the Psalmist finds his refuge only in Jehovah, so in this verse he finds his comfort in the conviction that whilst exposed to dangers, seen and unseen, Jehovah was intimately acquainted with them all, and that His watchful eye was ever upon him for good.

wherein I walked] Rather, "wherein or along which I walk," or "must walk." Cf. Ps. cxliii. 8.

privily laid a snare] Or, "hidden." Cf. Pss. cxl. 5, cxli. 9.

4. *I looked on my right hand*, &c.] This rendering is supported by some ancient versions. The literal rendering of the Heb. is "Look on the right hand and see." Cf. Job xxxv. 5; Lam. v. 1. The meaning seems to be that the enemies of the Psalmist were so many, and that their snares beset his path so thickly, that even God's all-seeing eye could discern no available human succour, and no way of escape provided for him.

there was no man that would know me] Literally, "there is to (or for) me none acknowledging," *i.e.* none willing to recognize me, or treat me with kindness. Cf. Ps. xxxviii. 11; also Jer. xxiv. 5, where God is said to "acknowledge" the captive Jews; and Ruth ii. 10, 19, where the reference is to the kindly recognition of Ruth by Boaz.

refuge failed me] Literally, "has perished from me." Cf. Job xi. 20; Ps. lix. 16.

no man cared for my soul] Lit. "there is no one seeking (or inquiring for) my soul," *i.e.* with a view to my good. Cf. Jer. xxx. 17. "This is Zion, whom no man *seeketh after*."

beheld, but *there was* no man that would know me: refuge †failed me; †no man cared for my soul.

† Heb. *perished from me.* † Heb. *no man sought after my soul.*

5 I cried unto thee, O LORD: I said, Thou *art* my refuge *and* my portion in the land of the living.

6 Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I.

7 Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: the righteous shall compass me about; for thou shalt deal bountifully with me.

Perhaps also Ezek. xiv. 7 may mean "to inquire of Me for his own benefit." Cf. Gen. ix. 5; Ezek. xiv. 3, xx. 3, 31, xxxvi. 37.

5. *Thou art my refuge*] Cf. 1 S. xxiv. 15; Ps. xci. 2, 9; 2 Tim. iv. 16, 17.

my portion] Cf. Ps. xvi. 5.

in the land of the living] Cf. Ps. xxvii. 13, and note in loc.; also Job xxviii. 13; and Isai. xxxviii. 11, where the phrase occurs in the same form as here.

6. Compare with the first clause of this verse Pss. xvii. 1, lxxix. 8; and with the second clause Pss. vii. 2, xviii. 17, xxxi. 15, xxxv. 3.

my cry] Generally a cry of joy; here, earnest supplication, as 1 K. viii. 28; Ps. xvii. 1 (where see note), and Ps. lxi. 1. Cf. also Lam. ii. 19, where the verb occurs in the sense of crying out in sorrow.

7. *out of prison*] The precisely parallel passage, Isai. xlii. 7, leaves little doubt that the word here rendered "prison" is rightly translated, although it occurs in no other passage in the psalter, and bears a different meaning in other places of the Old Test. Cf. Isai. xxiv. 22. The title of the psalm affords a probable clue to the use of the word in this place. Saul uses the verb from which this word is derived with reference to the transaction recorded in 1 S. xxiv., when the Lord "delivered" (lit. "shut up") him into the hand of David in the cave of Engedi, *v.* 18, and David would not kill him. See introduction to this psalm.

the righteous shall compass me about] The words here rendered "compass me about" are, probably, rightly so translated. The words may mean, however, "on my account the righteous shall adorn themselves with crowns" (*i.e.* shall rejoice on my account), or "shall crown themselves with me," *i.e.* shall make me their crown of glory; so Jer., "in me coronabuntur justi." Delitzsch compares 1 Cor. xii. 26. The construction is peculiar, and the precise meaning uncertain. LXX. ἐμὲ ὑπομενοῦσι δίκαιοι. Aq. ἐμὲ περιμενοῦσι δίκαιοι. Vulg. "me expectant justi." See Note below.

thou shalt deal bountifully with me] Or, "because Thou dealest," &c. An echo of Ps. xiii. 6.

The close of the psalm, in a manner characteristic of the psalms of David (*e.g.* xiii. 6, xl. 16, 17; cf. xxii. 22, 23, lviii. 10, 11, lxiv. 10, cxl. 13), and especially those of the time of his persecution at the hands of Saul, expresses the writer's confident expectation of eventual deliverance from his foes, and herein (whether designedly or undesignedly on the part of the Psalmist) we trace a prediction of the eventual triumph of good over evil. The reference to the joyful congratulations of the righteous seems to imply a revelation to the soul of the Psalmist, like that made to Elijah when he seemed to himself to be the only champion for the truth, that God had still reserved a remnant, amidst prevailing iniquity, who were ready to rejoice and to be glad. Cf. Ps. cvii. 42.

NOTE on PSALM CXLII. 7.

The verb כתר is used in the Piel in Ps. xxii. 12 in a hostile sense, as also in Judg. xx. 43. In the Hiphil it occurs elsewhere only in Prov. xiv. 18, and Hab. i. 4. In the latter place it is used in a hostile sense: in the former it appears to be used intransitively, and is so rendered in the A.V.; "the prudent are crowned with knowledge:" the verb being supposed to derive its signification from כתר corona, "utpote quod caput cingit."

PSALM CXLIII.

1 *David prayeth for favour in judgment.* 3 *He complaineth of his griefs.* 5 *He strengtheneth his faith by meditation and prayer.* 7 *He prayeth for grace,* 9 *for deliverance,* 10 *for sanctification,* 12 *for destruction of his enemies.*

A Psalm of David.

HEAR my prayer, O LORD, give ear to my supplications: in thy faithfulness answer me, *and* in thy righteousness.

PSALM CXLIII.

This is the last of the seven Penitential Psalms. The inscription in the Hebrew assigns it to David, and in some copies of the LXX. the words are added, "when Absalom his son pursued him." If it did not proceed

2 And enter not into judgment
[a] Exod. 34. 7. Rom. 3. 20. Gal. 2. 16. with thy servant: for [a] in thy sight shall no man living be justified.

3 For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead.

4 Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is desolate.

5 I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands.

6 I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul *thirsteth* after thee, as a thirsty land. Selah.

7 Hear me speedily, O LORD: my spirit faileth: hide not thy face from me, [l] lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.

[l] Or, *for I am become like*, &c.

8 Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the

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directly from the hand of David, it is, as it has been well described, "an extract of the most precious balsam from the old Davidic songs." The general character and phraseology of the psalm favour the supposition of its later date. It is closely connected with the preceding psalms by its subject, and partially by its phraseology. (See notes on *vv.* 4, 8, 11.) If regarded as a late psalm it bears witness to the manner in which, from the time of the exile downwards, the Davidic psalms have been the spiritual treasury of the Church. The division of the psalm into two equal parts, each consisting of six verses, is marked by the *Selah* at the end of *v.* 6, the use of which, though ordinarily a mark of antiquity, can scarcely be so regarded in the case of a psalm which, if not composed by David, is clearly based upon the model of the Davidic psalms.

1. *in thy faithfulness answer me*, &c.] The Psalmist pleads not only God's faithfulness to His promises, *i.e.* His essential and eternal truth, but also His justice and His righteousness; for He is not only faithful but also just to forgive the sins of His people (1 John i. 9). The word "and" is not in the Hebrew. "In Thy faithfulness answer me, in (*i.e.* even in, or in accordance with) Thy justice (or righteousness)."

2. *And enter not*, &c.] It is clear from this verse that it is not a legal but an evangelical righteousness on which the Psalmist's plea for mercy is based. If God were to deal with man on the ground of his own merits no flesh should be justified. Cf. Job xiv. 3, xxii. 4.

no man living, &c.] Or, "for no living creature is just or righteous before Thee." Cf. Job ix. 32. Not only men, but also angels fall short of the standard of God's holiness. "The heavens are not clean in His sight" (Job xv. 15); much less can "he that is born of a woman be righteous" before Him. (Job xv. 14.)

3. *For the enemy*, &c.] A consciousness of guilt and of deserved punishment seems to lie at the root of the Psalmist's prayer, and to prompt his supplication for forgiveness.

he hath smitten] Rather, "trodden or crushed to the earth."

in darkness] The word (which is plural) occurs elsewhere in the psalter only in lxxiv. 20, and lxxxviii. 6. There is a close resemblance between the psalm last quoted and the present.

as those that have been long dead] Rather, "as those that are for ever dead," *i.e.* buried alive for ever. The question of a future life is not involved in the comparison. The same words are found in Lam. iii. 6 with a single transposition. (Cf. Pss. cv. 10, cxii. 6; Jer. xxxi. 9.)

4. *overwhelmed*] See note on Ps. cxlii. 3.

is desolate] "Amazed," "astonied," or "dispirited." The word in the form here used is of rare occurrence, and is not found elsewhere in the psalter. It is used in Isai. lix. 16, lxiii. 5; Eccles. vii. 16, and Daniel viii. 27. Cf. Ps. lxxvii. 3—6, also Lam. iii. 11.

5. Compare Ps. lxxvii. 12, with which this verse very closely corresponds. The only other place in which the verb rendered "muse" occurs in the same form is Isai. liii. 8. The word rendered "complain" in Ps. lxxvii. 3, and "commune" in Ps. lxxvii. 6, is a different form of the same verb.

thy works] Rather, "Thy doing," or "doings." Cf. Ps. xcii. 4 and note. In some MSS. and most versions both this noun and that translated "work" (a different word in the Heb.) are in the plural.

6. *I stretch forth my hands*, &c.] Lit. "I have stretched forth my hands to Thee; my soul, as a parched land, to Thee." The meaning is the same whether we understand a verb before or after the word "soul," *i.e.* whether the Psalmist is represented as lifting up his soul to God, or his soul is represented as thirsting after God.

7. *Hear me speedily*] Or, "Make haste (and) answer me."

lest I be like unto them, &c.] Or, "become like," &c. Verbatim from Ps. xxviii. 1.

8. *Cause me to hear*, &c.] Cf. Ps. xc. 14.

in the morning] *i.e.* "early." Cf. Ps. xc. 14.

way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.

9 Deliver me, O LORD, from mine enemies: I † flee unto thee to hide me.

10 Teach me to do thy will; for thou *art* my God: thy spirit *is* good; lead me into the land of uprightness.

11 Quicken me, O LORD, for thy name's sake: for thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble.

12 And of thy mercy cut off mine enemies, and destroy all them that afflict my soul: for I *am* thy servant.

† Heb. *hide me with thee.*

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for in thee do I trust] Or, "have I trusted." Cf. Ps. xxv. 2.

cause me to know the way] Cf. Pss. xxv. 8, cxlii. 3.

I lift up my soul unto thee] Or, "I have lifted." Cf. Ps. xxv. 1.

9. *I flee unto thee to hide me*] The words literally rendered are, "To Thee have I concealed or hidden." Two explanations have been proposed; (1) To Thee have I entrusted or confided my troubles; (2) In (or, with) Thee have I hidden myself, *i.e.* found a refuge or hiding-place. The latter interpretation is in conformity with the undoubtedly reflective sense of the verb in many passages (cf. Gen. xxxviii. 14; Deut. xxii. 12; Jonah iii. 6) and with the general phraseology of David. LXX. [ὅτι] πρὸς σὲ κατέφυγον. Jer. "a te protectus sum."

10. *thy spirit is good*, &c.] Rather (though in violation of the accentuation), "let Thy good Spirit lead me, &c.," or more literally, "let Thy Spirit, a good (Spirit), lead me, &c." (Cf. Gen. xxxvii. 2, xliii. 14; Hag. i. 4, for the omission of the article after nouns with pronom. suffixes.) Cf. also Neh. ix. 20, where the art. is prefixed to the adj.

the land of uprightness] Literally, "the land of a level region, or plain;" or, as the same words are rendered in Deut. iv. 43, and Jer. xlviii. 21, "the plain country." The allusion seems to be to the land on the east of the Jordan, which was inhabited by the Reubenites, as being well adapted for the support of their flocks. The district known by this name had been one of great interest and importance to the Israelites. See Ritter's 'Palestine,' Vol. II. p. 153. Figuratively, the word denotes "equity," or "righteousness." Cf. Ps. xxvii. 11 and note in loc.; also Isai. xxvi. 7, 10. See Note below.

11, 12. *Quicken me, O LORD, for thy name's sake*] The phraseology is that of the earlier psalms. Cf. lxxi. 20, xxv. 11; also cxlii. 7.

for thy righteousness' sake] It is worthy of observation that the Psalmist pleads God's righteousness as the foundation on which he bases his supplication for the deliverance of his soul from trouble, and God's lovingkindness or mercy as that on which he grounds his prayer, or his conviction, that God will destroy his enemies. This is not the language of a revengeful and bloodthirsty spirit. Cf. Pss. liv. 7 and xciv. 23. Ps. v. 8 should be compared with *vv.* 10 and 11.

NOTE on PSALM CXLIII. 10.

Some codices have בארח instead of בארץ, *i.e.* in, or "into the path, or way of uprightness."

PSALM CXLIV.

1 *David blesseth God for his mercy both to him and to man.* 5 *He prayeth that God would powerfully deliver him from his enemies.* 9 *He promiseth to praise God.* 11 *He prayeth for the happy state of the kingdom.*

A Psalm of David.

BLESSED *be* the LORD † my strength, [a]which teacheth my hands † to war, *and* my fingers to fight:

2 [b]‖ My goodness, and my fortress; my high tower, and my deliverer; my

† Heb. *my rock.*
[a] 2 Sam. 22. 35.
† Heb. *to the war*, &c.
[b] 2 Sam. 22. 2, 3, 40.
‖ Or, *My mercy.*

PSALM CXLIV.

This psalm bears as its inscription, "To, or of, David." It is manifestly the production of one who was the generally recognized ruler of the nation. It refers, moreover, to a time of danger from foreign foes (*vv.* 6, 7, 11), and perhaps also to present or past rebellion on the part of the Psalmist's own subjects. (See Note on *v.* 2 at end.) The LXX. add πρὸς τὸν Γολιάθ, and the Targumist refers the "evil sword" of *v.* 10 to the sword of Goliath, but the internal evidence is decisive against this supposition. The former part of the psalm is based upon the earlier psalms, and in particular upon the 18th, which was composed long after the event to which the inscription of the LXX. refers this ps. (See int. to that psalm.) It might naturally close with the refrain of *v.* 11, and there seems no necessary connection between the two parts. The latter part has not the

shield, and *he* in whom I trust; who subdueth my people under me.

[c] Job 7. 17. Ps. 8. 4. Hebr. 2. 6.

3 [c]LORD, what *is* man, that thou takest knowledge of him! *or* the son of man, that thou makest account of him!

4 [d]Man is like to vanity: his days *are* as a shadow that passeth away.

[d] Job 14. 2. Ps. 39. 5.

5 Bow thy heavens, O LORD, and come down: touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.

6 [e]Cast forth lightning, and scatter

[e] Ps. 18. 13, 14.

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allusions to earlier psalms which abound in the former. There is more vigour and originality in it. It abounds in the use of peculiar words, and it bears no direct traces of having proceeded from the same writer. At the same time the connection is not so forced as some have represented it, if we suppose the Psalmist, whether David himself, or one of his posterity and successors, to have banished from his memory the past, and to be indulging only bright anticipations of the future. These would naturally find their expression in fresh and terse diction, unalloyed by those allusions to scenes of past trial and difficulty which, as naturally, recalled to the writer either his own personal recollections, or David's description of similar circumstances.

The psalm, in its mingled tones of prayer and praise, is a fit connecting link between the supplicatory psalms which go before, and the strains of thanksgiving which follow it.

1. *my strength*] Lit. "my rock." Cf. Ps. xviii. 2, 46, where the same Hebrew word is rendered "strength" in the former verse and "rock" in the latter.

which teacheth my hands to war, &c.] Rather, "Who instructeth my hands for battle (cf. Pss. lv. 21, lxxviii. 9), my fingers for war" (cf. Ps. xviii. 34). The first two verses of this ps. are a direct echo of David's great song of thanksgiving as recorded in Ps. xviii. (see notes on that ps.), and 2 S. xxii. Five of the descriptive terms which occur in *v.* 2 are taken from Ps. xviii. 2.

2. *My goodness*] Rather, "My lovingkindness or mercy," an abbreviated form, apparently, of "the God of my mercy." Cf. Ps. lix. 10, 17; also Jonah ii. 8.

my deliverer] Lit. "my deliverer for me," as in 2 S. xxii. 2.

I trust] Or, "have taken refuge."

who subdueth my people under me] Cf. Ps. xviii. 47, 48, where, however, we read "peoples" instead of "my people." (See Note at end.) The only other place where the verb rendered "subdueth" occurs in this form, or in this signification, is Isai. xlv. 1, "to subdue nations before him." If the reading "my people" be retained, the word "subdueth" would naturally refer to the quelling of rebellion, as in the case of Absalom, not to the exercise of despotic power. Delitzsch, who thinks the psalm, though composed at a later period, designed to express the feelings with which David, who had already been anointed by Samuel, entered upon the conflict with Goliath, considers the reference to be prospective, *i.e.* to David's hope and conviction that Jehovah would constrain the people to accept him as their king.

3. *LORD, what is man*, &c.] This is an evident echo of Ps. viii. 4.

or the son of man] Rather, "the son of frail or mortal man."

4. *Man is like to vanity*, &c.] Cf. Pss. xxxix. 5, 6, lxii. 9, for the first clause of this verse, and Job viii. 9, xiv. 2; Pss. cii. 11, cix. 23, for the second.

5. *Bow thy heavens*, &c.] The broken thread is here resumed, and the order of Ps. xviii. is continued, but that which is recorded historically in Ps. xviii. is here the subject of the Psalmist's prayer. The connection of the interpolated strophe, *vv.* 3, 4, with the preceding and the following may be as follows. Whereas in Ps. xviii. the Psalmist describes the greatness of his sorrow, and records his invocation of Jehovah in his distress, here, in the form of an exclamation, he expresses his conviction of the utter insignificance and unworthiness of man, and of the wondrous condescension of God in deigning to interpose in his behalf. Dr Kay refers by way of illustration to 2 S. vii. 16 and 18, as presenting a similar contrast.

touch the mountains, &c.] Taken from Ps. civ. 32. As the latent fire needs but the divine summons to evoke it into action, so the wicked have within themselves the elements of misery, which await only a signal from above to be brought into full operation. The primary allusion is evidently to the Theophany on Mount Sinai. Cf. Exod. xix. 18, xx. 18. The mountains here are clearly the hostile powers. Cf. Pss. lxviii. 16, lxxvi. 4.

6. *Cast forth lightning*] Lit. "Lighten lightning." The verb is found in no other place.

scatter them...destroy them] The reference is clearly to the Psalmist's enemies who are mentioned in Ps. xviii. 3, but whose existence is here only implied. A comparison of this verse with Psalm xviii. 14 affords a good illustration of one of the forms of parallelism which distinguish Hebrew poetry. In the passage cited it is the arrows which "scatter" the enemy and the lightning which "discomfits" them (the same word which is here ren-

them: shoot out thine arrows, and destroy them.

† Heb. *hands.*

7 Send thine †hand from above; rid me, and deliver me out of great waters, from the hand of strange children;

8 Whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand *is* a right hand of falsehood.

9 I will sing a new song unto thee, O God: upon a psaltery *and* an instrument of ten strings will I sing praises unto thee.

10 *It is he* that giveth ‖salvation unto kings: who delivereth David his servant from the hurtful sword.

‖ Or, *victory.*

11 Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand *is* a right hand of falsehood:

12 That our sons *may be* as plants grown up in their youth; *that* our

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dered *destroy*). In this psalm it is the lightning which "scatters" them, and the arrows which "destroy" them.

7. *Send thine hand from above*] Rather, "Put out, or stretch forth, Thine hand." The idea is taken from Ps. xviii. 16, "He sent from above," as it is also in the prayer for deliverance from the great waters. The verb here used with reference to the great waters is used in *v.* 11 with reference to the aliens, as in Ps. xviii. 17 with reference to the Psalmist's "strong enemy," and those who "hated" him; thus affording a key to the interpretation of the meaning of the "great" or many "waters." What is there related historically is still, in this place, the subject of supplication.

The word rendered in this verse and *v.* 11 "rid," and in *v.* 10 "deliver," as in its Aramaic signification, is elsewhere used in the sense of opening wide, always in conjunction with *peh* (the mouth), except in Ps. lxvi. 14, where it occurs with *saphah* (the lip). Cf. Ps. xxii. 13; Gen. iv. 11; Isai. x. 14, &c.

strange children] Rather, "sons of a strange land," *i.e.* heathen.

8. *Whose mouth speaketh vanity*] Cf. Pss. xii. 2, xli. 6.

their right hand is a right hand of falsehood] A phrase peculiar to this place. Elsewhere, a tongue or lips of falsehood. Cf. Pss. xxxi. 18, cix. 2. The allusion is to the lifting up of the right hand in an oath or solemn asseveration, as in Gen. xiv. 22; Deut. xxxii. 40; Ps. cvi. 26; Isai. lxii. 8. Cf. Ps. xxvi. 10, "their right hand is full of bribes." The nearest parallel seems to be Isai. xliv. 20: "Is there not a lie in my right hand?" Cf. Θεοῖσι πρῶτα δεξιώσομαι, Æsch. 'Agam.' 852.

9. *I will sing a new song*] The Psalmist's expectation of a favourable answer to his prayer is so confident that he utters unconditionally a vow of thanksgiving. See note on Ps. xxxiii. 3.

O God] The only place in Books IV. and V., with the exception of the composite Ps. cviii., in which God is addressed as *Elohim*, without the pronominal suffix. In Book IV. *Elohim* occurs once as a predicate of Jehovah, as the true God (c. 3). In other places it is used of created beings in the last two books.

upon a psaltery] Rather, "upon a psaltery with ten strings." Cf. note on Ps. xxxiii. 2.

will I sing praises] Or, "will I play unto Thee." But here, as elsewhere, the vocal accompaniment is clearly implied.

10. *It is he that giveth*] Lit., "Who giveth." There is a change of person. The construction is characteristic of Ps. xviii., in which, as here, sentences are connected by a participle agreeing with a preceding noun. Cf. *vv.* 33, 34 of that psalm.

unto kings] Lit. "unto the kings," *i.e.* the royal house of David, as distinguished from other "kings of the earth" (Ps. cxlviii. 11). Even they have no saving power of their own (cf. Ps. cxlvi. 3). It is God Who gives it to them.

who delivereth David his servant] This corresponds with Ps. xviii. 50. It might seem to imply the Davidic origin of the psalm, as identifying David with the supplicant of *vv.* 7 and 11; but the present participle may here be understood retrospectively, as in Ps. xviii. 50 it is used prospectively; or *David* may here stand for David and his seed (cf. Ps. xviii. 50), as, in Ps. cxlvii. 19, *Jacob* is used to denote his descendants. (See Note at end.) It should be observed that the word rendered "delivereth" in this verse, and "rid" in *vv.* 7 (see note) and 11, is here again used in quite a different signification from that which it bears in Pss. xxii. 13 and lxvi. 14.

the hurtful sword] Lit. "the sword of evil." The allusion may be to the destructiveness of the sword, or it may be to the badness of the cause in which the sword from which the Psalmist prays for deliverance was drawn.

11. *Rid me, and deliver me*] *i.e.* Probably, "As Thou didst deliver David Thy servant, so now also rid and deliver me." The refrain of this verse, taken from *vv.* 7 and 8, seems to form a suitable termination to the psalm. The remaining portion is involved in great obscurity and difficulty.

12. *That our sons may be*] Or, "Whose

daughters *may be* as corner stones, † Heb. *cut.* †polished *after* the similitude of a palace:

13 *That* our garners *may be* full, affording † Heb. *from kind to kind.* †all manner of store: *that* our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets:

14 *That* our oxen *may be* †strong to labour; *that there be* no breaking in, nor going out; that *there be* no complaining in our streets. † Heb. *able to bear burdens, or, loaden with flesh.*

15 ✓Happy *is that* people, that is in such a case: *yea*, happy *is that* people, whose God *is* the LORD. ✓ Ps. 33. 12. & 65. 4.

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sons are," &c., in which case *v.* 15 supplies the correlative clause. (So Ewald.) The construction is peculiar and may have been suggested by *v.* 8. LXX. ὧν οἱ υἱοὶ αὐτῶν. Jer. "ut sint filii nostri." (See Note at end.)

grown up] Rather, "well grown," or "grown large in their youth;" so Dr Kay. Cf. Isai. i. 2, xxiii. 4; Hos. ix. 12. The word occurs in the same form only in this place. The sons are aptly compared to plants or trees, which flourish in the open air, whilst the daughters are compared to sculptured pillars, which impart grace as well as strength to the interior of a building.

corner stones] Rather, "corner pillars," or "columns." Cf. κερατοειδεῖς γώνιαι, Jos. 'B. J.' v. 5, 6. Cf. also Zech. ix. 15, the only other place where the word occurs.

polished] Rather, "cut" or "sculptured." The word is elsewhere invariably used of wood (with the exception of Prov. vii. 16, where it is used of yarn), and not of stone. The use of male and female figures to support porticos or entablatures seems to be of more modern origin.

after the similitude of a palace] Perhaps "according to the model (or pattern) of the temple." The Prayer-Book Version has "the polished corners of the temple." The temple was the great architectural model of the Hebrews. LXX. ὡς ὁμοίωμα ναοῦ. Jer. "ad similitudinem templi." Cf. Amos viii. 3, and Isai. xliv. 28, for the omission of the article. Cf. 1 K. vii. 21 for the account of the pillars Jachin and Boaz set up by king Solomon in the porch of the temple.

13. *That our garners*, &c.] Lit. "Our garners full," *i.e.* if the construction of *v.* 12 be continued, "whose garners are full."

affording all manner of store] Lit. "giving," or "pouring forth abundantly from kind to kind," *i.e.* all descriptions of produce. The word occurs in the psalter only in this place and Ps. cxl. 9.

that our sheep, &c.] More lit. "our sheep bringing forth thousands, multiplied by myriads."

in our streets] Rather, "in our fields or open pastures" (see note on Job v. 10).

14. *That our oxen may be strong*] The meaning is doubtful. It may be, "our oxen laden with produce," or "our kine fruitful," or "our chiefs (or heads of families) firmly established." (See Note at end.)

that there be no breaking in, &c.] Rather, "no breach," *i.e.* through hostile assault, "and no going out," *i.e.* into captivity. The word rendered "breaking in" occurs in the psalter elsewhere only in Ps. cvi. 23. Cf. Jer. xxix. 16; Amos iv. 3: "And ye shall go out (*i.e.* probably into captivity) through rents or breaches in the wall," where forms of the same words which are here rendered "breaking in" and "going out" are employed.

that there be no complaining, &c.] Rather, "and no cry of sorrow (cf. Isai. xxiv. 11; Jer. xiv. 2, xlvi. 12) in our open places," *i.e.* the places where the people commonly assembled near the gate of the city (cf. 2 Chro. xxxii. 6; Neh. viii. 1). The word rendered "complaining" does not occur elsewhere in the psalter.

15. *Happy is that people*, &c.] Rather, "Blessed is the people," &c. This seems to be the correlative clause to *v.* 12. It is possible, owing to the close correspondence of the initial words of the two verses in the Hebrew, that the two words which begin this verse may have dropped out of the beginning of *v.* 12. (See Note at end.)

NOTES on PSALM CXLIV. 2, 10, 12, 14, 15.

2. The Masora notes this as one of three places in which the singular form of this noun (עַמִּי) stands where we should expect the plural. (The two other places are 2 S. xxii. 44, and Lam. iii. 14.) The Targum, Syriac, and Jerome, as well as many MSS., read the word in the plural.

10. The orthography of the name *David* is the same as in other psalms דּוֹד, not as in the books of Chronicles and other late books דָּוִיד.

12. The rendering of אֲשֶׁר in the sense of *in order that* is supported by Deut. iv. 40, where the same word is used in its ordinary sense as a rel. pron. in the same verse, and where לְמַעַן follows in the signification of *in order that;* cf. Gen. xi. 7; 1 K. xxii. 16; but in all these cases it is followed by the finite verb and not by the

part. Or אישר may mean *for*, as Deut. iii. 24; and the verses must then be read not as containing a prayer, but a reason for the prayer of the preceding verse. This explanation, however, seems unsatisfactory.

14. The word אלופינו, rendered "our oxen," may possibly be an epicene form of אלף and mean *our kine;* or it may refer to the heads of tribes or families. If it denotes oxen or kine, the part. מסבלים (which agrees with it in gender) would mean *laden with produce*, or *pregnant*. If it denotes heads of tribes or families, the part. should be rendered *set up*, or *firmly established*. Cf. Ezra vi. 3. The verb סבל does not occur in the psalter. The noun is found in Ps. lxxxi. 6 in the sense of *burden*.

15. ש, whether an orig. pronom. stem, or an abbrev. for אישר, is found both in early and in later Heb. Cf. Gen. vi. 3; Judg. v. 7, vi. 17; Song of S. i. 7, iii. 3, 4; Eccles. ii. 13, 22, iii. 18; Pss. cxxiv. 8, cxlvi. 3. The abbreviation here is probably on account of the preceding and following אשרי.

PSALM CXLV.

1 *David praiseth God for his fame,* 8 *for his goodness,* 11 *for his kingdom,* 14 *for his providence,* 17 *for his saving mercy.*

David's *Psalm* of praise.

I WILL extol thee, my God, O king; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever.

2 Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever.

3 Great *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised; †and his greatness *is* unsearchable. † Heb. *and of his greatness there is no search.*

4 One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.

5 I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous †works. † Heb. *things*, or, *words.*

6 And *men* shall speak of the might

PSALM CXLV.

This psalm is the last of the alphabetical psalms. It is the only psalm which bears as its title the word Tehillah (praise), a title taken probably from the last verse, and answering antithetically to Tephillah, "prayer," cxlii. 1, and from which the whole of the psalter derives its name, Tillim or Tehillim. (See Introd.) It is said to have been the ancient Church's psalm for the mid-day meal (see Armknecht, 'Die Heilige Psalmodie,' s. 54), and St Chrysostom says that *v.* 15 was used at the Holy Communion.

This psalm, which has been described as "the new song" promised in Ps. cxliv. 9, consists of 21 distichs, in alphabetical order, the distich of the letter *nun* alone being deficient, for which deficiency no satisfactory reason can be assigned. The LXX. supply the missing verse by the insertion of *v.* 17, with two slight alterations. They appear to have read thus: נאמן יהוה בכל־דבריו וחסיד בכל־מעשיו. Πιστὸς Κύριος ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς λόγοις αὐτοῦ, καὶ ὅσιος ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ. The latter of these clauses is borrowed from *v.* 17. The distich is not inserted by Aquila or Theodotion, nor was it found in the Heb. text of Origen or of Jerome. It is rejected by the Chaldee Version and by the Jewish interpreters generally.

The name of David is given in the title as the author, as it is to four of the other alphabetical psalms. The subject of the psalm is well described in its title. It is a magnificent ode of praise to the all-powerful and all-merciful Creator, Whose providential care over all the creatures of His hands is as minute as His dominion is universal and His kingdom everlasting.

1. *O king*] Or, "the king." If David, or one of his posterity, wrote this psalm, there is special force and propriety in the appellation, "the king." Cf. Ps. xcviii. 6. In this case, the Psalmist transfers to the Heavenly King the honour paid to himself as the earthly.

for ever and ever] This verse recals Pss. xxx. 1 and xxxiv. 1. See the general Introduction on the import of this and similar intimations of immortality.

3. *Great is the* LORD, &c.] The first clause of this verse is taken verbatim from Ps. xlviii. 1. Cf. Ps. xviii. 3.

and his greatness, &c.] Lit., "and to (or of) His greatness there is no searching out." Cf. Job xi. 7; Isai. xl. 28.

4. *One generation shall praise*, &c.] Lit. "Generation to generation shall praise," or "praises," &c. Cf. Ps. xix. 2.

5. *I will speak*, &c.] Lit. "The splendour of the glory of Thy majesty (cf. *v.* 12, "the glory of the splendour of"), and the words (cf. Ps. lxv. 3, and the title of the books of Chronicles, *words, i.e. histories of the days*) of Thy wonders will I meditate upon" (or "rehearse in poetry," as De Wette).

6. *the might*] This noun occurs only in

† Heb. *declare it.*

of thy terrible acts: and I will †declare thy greatness.

7 They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness.

a Exod. 34. 6, 7. Numb. 14. 18. Ps. 86. 5, 15. &103. 8.

8 a The LORD *is* gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and †of great mercy.

† Heb. *great in mercy.*

9 The LORD *is* good to all: and his tender mercies *are* over all his works.

10 All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD; and thy saints shall bless thee.

11 They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power;

12 To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.

† Heb. *a kingdom of all ages.*

13 Thy kingdom *is* †an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion *endureth* throughout all generations.

14 The LORD upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all *those that be* bowed down.

15 The eyes of all ‖wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season.

‖ Or, *look unto thee.*

16 Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

17 The LORD *is* righteous in all his ways, and ‖holy in all his works.

‖ Or, *merciful*, or, *bountiful.*

18 The LORD *is* nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.

19 He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.

Ps. lxxviii. 4 and Isai. xlii. 25. In the former case there is a close resemblance in subject and phraseology to this passage.

and I will declare thy greatness] Rather, "and as to Thy mighty works I will declare" or "rehearse it," *i.e.* each of them. See Note at end.

7. *They shall abundantly utter*, &c.] Lit. "pour forth" (as from a fountain). Cf. Pss. xix. 2, lix. 7. As in Ps. lxxviii., the theme of the Psalmist is not only the majesty but also the mercy of the Lord.

and shall sing] Rather, "sing aloud" or "joyfully of."

8. *of great mercy*] Rather, "great in mercy" or "lovingkindness." The verse is taken almost verbatim from Ps. ciii. 8. Cf. Ps. lxxxvi. 15.

9. *all his works*] Cf. Ps. ciii. 22.

10. *thy saints*] Or, "beloved ones." See note on Ps. xvi. 10.

12. *mighty acts*] Rather, "acts of power," as compared with "power" in *v.* 11.

13. *an everlasting kingdom*] Lit. "a kingdom of all ages." LXX. βασιλεία πάντων τῶν αἰώνων. The word עולם = αἰών appears to be here used in its most comprehensive sense, as looking back to all eternity (cf. Ps. lxxvii. 5), and looking forward to all futurity (cf. Ps. lxxvii. 7).

throughout all generations] Lit. "in every generation and generation." This phrase is probably taken from Ps. xlv. 17. Cf. Ps. xc. 1. The resemblance between this verse and Dan. iv. 3, 34 is still closer. It by no means follows, however, that the psalm is of Maccabean date, or that the Hebrew of the Psalmist is borrowed from the Chaldee of Daniel. The facts of the case point to the opposite inference.

14. *all that fall*] Lit. "all the falling (ones)." Cf. Ps. xxxvii. 24, where also the two verbs here rendered "upholdeth" and "fall" are found. The minuteness of God's providential care is here represented as co-extensive with the universality of His dominion. It is not unworthy of observation that the invention of the microscope was almost contemporaneous with that of the telescope. The one, as has been observed by Chalmers in the third of his 'Astronomical Discourses,' revealed "a system in every star;" the other, "a world in every atom."

raiseth up, &c.] The word rendered "raiseth up" occurs only here and in Ps. cxlvi. 8, where, as here, it is found in conjunction with the word which is rendered "bowed down;" a word which occurs only in three other places throughout the Old Testament.

15. *wait upon thee*] Or, "look expectantly to Thee." The verb occurs in the psalter only in Pss. civ. 27, cxix. 116, 166, and cxlvi. 5.

thou givest] The personal pronoun and the part. are here used, "Thou (art) giving."

in due season] Lit. "in its season." This and the following verse correspond with Ps. civ. 27, 28.

16. *Thou openest*, &c.] Lit. "Opening...and satisfying (or supplying) to every living thing (its) desire." Cf. Deut. xxxiii. 23; also *v.* 19 of this psalm. Cf. also Acts xiv. 17.

17. *and holy*] Or, "merciful." See note on Ps. xvi. 10. The word is used as an

20 The LORD preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.

21 My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD: and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever.

attributive of God only here and in Jer. iii. 12, where the A. V. has "merciful."

19. *He will fulfil*, &c.] Or, "He fulfils... He hears...and He saves them."

20. *all the wicked will he destroy*] Or, "He destroys." The verb rendered "destroy" occurs in the psalter in the same form only in Ps. cvi. 23, 34. It must not be overlooked that this declaration occurs in a song of praise. The whole of the context is utterly inconsistent with the expression of emotions of anger or revenge.

21. *My mouth shall speak*] Or, "let my mouth speak," &c. The verbs rendered "speak" and "bless" in this verse may be rendered either in the future, or in an optative form, which are the same in the third person.

his holy name] This phrase occurs three times in other parts of the psalter, viz. in Pss. xxxiii. 21, ciii. 1, cv. 3.

for ever and ever] Cf. *v.* 1.

NOTE on PSALM CXLV. 6.

The Chethib וגדלותיך is probably the true reading. So Aquila, *καὶ μεγαλωσύνας σου διηγήσομαι αὐτάς*, and Jerome, "et magnitudines tuas narrabunt." The parallelism is also in favour of this reading. Cf. *v.* 12, גבורתיו, with גבורתך, *v.* 11.—The Keri, which is followed by the LXX., *καὶ τὴν μεγαλωσύνην σου διηγήσονται*, the Vulg., "et magnitudinem tuam narrabunt," and the A.V., has the singular וגדולתך. The singular pronom. suffix (אכפרנה) with reference to a pl. noun occurs in 2 S. xxii. 23; 2 K. iii. 3, and elsewhere.

PSALM CXLVI.

1 *The psalmist voweth perpetual praises to God.* 3 *He exhorteth not to trust in man.* 5 *God, for his power, justice, mercy, and kingdom, is only worthy to be trusted.*

† PRAISE ye the LORD. Praise the LORD, O my soul. † Heb. *Hallelujah.*

2 While I live will I praise the LORD: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being.

PSALM CXLVI.

The psalter, in harmony with its general title, Tehillim, *i.e.* Songs of Praise, ends with five Hallelujah psalms, so called from their beginning and ending with Hallelujah. This group of psalms, of which the cxlvith is the first, has been improperly designated the Greek Hallel, in contradistinction from that earlier group of psalms (cxiii.—cxviii.) which is known as the Egyptian Hallel; and it formed a part of the Jewish daily form of Morning Prayer.

The inscription of the LXX., which ascribes this and the two following psalms to Haggai and Zechariah, is so far consistent with the internal evidence that they both bear witness to a date of composition subsequent to the exile. The psalm, which was probably written by one who had himself been a stranger in a strange land (see note on *v.* 9), is an earnest exhortation, from one who had experienced the frailty and instability of man, to trust in the living God, the Creator of heaven and earth, Whose faithfulness is as great as His power, and Whose tender mercies, whilst they are over all His works, are more especially displayed on behalf of those who have no earthly helper.

The points of connection, both of thought and expression, with the preceding psalm are numerous, and seem to point to an identity of authorship. Amongst these the following deserve notice:

(1) "I will praise the LORD," *v.* 2, compared with cxlv. 2.

(2) "whose hope" (שברו), *v.* 5, compared with cxlv. 15, where the cognate verb is used. It should be observed that the only other places in the psalter, in which either the noun or verb occurs, are Pss. civ. 27 and cxix. 116, 166.

(3) "which giveth food," *v.* 7, compared with cxlv. 15.

(4) "the LORD raiseth (זקף) them that are bowed down" (כפופים), *v.* 8, compared with cxlv. 14. The former of these words, which is of common occurrence in Aramaic (cf. Ezra vi. 11), is not found in the Hebrew portions of the Old Testament, except in these two places. The latter word occurs elsewhere only in Ps. lvii. 6; Isai. lviii. 5; and Micah vi. 6.

(5) "The LORD preserveth the strangers," *v.* 9, compared with cxlv. 14.

(6) "The LORD shall reign for ever" and "unto all generations," *v.* 10, compared with cxlv. 13.

s. 118. 3 [a]Put not your trust in princes, *nor* in the son of man, in whom *there is* no ‖help.

r, vation. 4 His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.

5 Happy *is he* that *hath* the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope *is* in the LORD his God:

6 Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein *is:* which keepeth truth for ever:

7 Which executeth judgment for the oppressed: which giveth food to the hungry. The LORD looseth the prisoners:

8 The LORD openeth *the eyes of* the blind: the LORD raiseth them that are bowed down: the LORD loveth the righteous:

9 The LORD preserveth the stran-

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1. *Praise ye the* LORD] Or, "Hallelujah." See note on Ps. cxi. 1.

Praise the LORD, *O my soul*] As a fit prelude to these psalms of praise the Psalmist attunes his own soul to that work of praise in which he summons all creation to join. Cf. Pss. ciii. 22, civ. 1, 33, 34.

2. *I will sing praises*] Cf. Pss. xxxiii. 2, xcviii. 5, cxlix. 3.

while I have any being] The form of the Hebrew word thus translated is peculiar. It occurs elsewhere only in Ps. civ. 33. The parallelism of the two clauses of the verse is sustained throughout. (See Note at end.)

3. *in princes*] This word is used as well of domestic as of foreign rulers. Cf. Num. xxi. 18; Pss. cxiii. 8, cxviii. 9. In any case it is as applicable to Persian as to Grecian rulers, and therefore it cannot indicate the Maccabean date of the psalm. In Ps. cvii. 40 (which is taken from Job xii. 21), where the same word is used, we read, "God poureth contempt upon princes," *i.e.* the rulers of Israel, during the time of the captivity.

in whom] See Note on Ps. cxliv. 15 at end.

4. *he returneth to his earth*] *i.e.* the earth out of which he was originally made (cf. Gen. ii. 7), and unto which he must again return. Cf. Gen. iii. 19; Ps. civ. 29, also 1 Macc. ii. 63, εἰς τὸν χοῦν αὐτοῦ, which last passage was probably taken from this psalm. (See Note at end.)

5. *Happy is he*] This is the last of the 25 places (or 26, if Ps. cxxviii. 2 be included) in which the word אַשְׁרֵי, *ashre*, with which the psalter begins, is found.

for his help] Rather, "whose help is the God of Jacob." Cf. Ex. xviii. 4; Ps. xxxv. 2. (Cf. for the Hebrew use of *Beth essentiæ* Gesenius's 'Thesaurus,' pp. 174, 175.)

whose hope] Cf. Jer. xvii. 7, also Ps. xxxiii. 12. (See introd. to this psalm for the use of this word.)

6. *Which made*, &c.] The ground of confidence in God rather than in man is here explained. The phrase is characteristic of the later psalms. It occurs in a slightly varied form (*i.e.* where the part. is in a state of construction) in Pss. cxv. 15, cxxi. 2, cxxiv. 8. Cf. Acts iv. 24.

which keepeth truth, &c.] In this clause only the article is prefixed to the participle, probably to denote in a special manner God's faithfulness to His promises.

7. *The* LORD *looseth the prisoners*] Or, "those that are bound." The allusion is probably to the release from the Babylonian captivity. The same word is used of Jeremiah (xl. 1). This is the first of five clauses, each beginning with the word Jehovah, and, in common with the clauses preceding and following them, each consisting of three words, which is the favourite measure of the lines in the book of Job. In the first and second clauses the participles, rendered "looseth" and "openeth," which properly belong to the chains and to the eyes (which are understood but not expressed in the Hebrew), are made to apply to the persons who are bound, and to those who have lost their sight.

8. *raiseth*] See introd. to this psalm. The several works of mercy enumerated in these verses were combined in the personal ministry of our Lord. He gave food to the hungry, Matt. xiv. 15—21, xv. 32—38. He loosed those that were bound, Luke viii. 29. He opened the eyes of the blind, Matt. ix. 27—31; John ix. 1—8. He raised those that were bowed down, Luke xiii. 11—16.

9. *relieveth*] Rather, **upholdeth**, or **setteth upright**. Cf. Ps. xx. 8, where the same verb occurs in another form, and is rendered "stand upright." The form in which it here occurs is found elsewhere only in Ps. cxlvii. 6. The strangers, the widow, and the fatherless, who are combined in this place only in the psalter, are the three special types of the needy and afflicted. The word rendered "strangers," when used in connection with the widow and the fatherless, is commonly in the singular. When it is found, as here, in the plural, and without the article, it is generally used of the Israelites when in a foreign land.

he turneth upside down] Or, "turneth aside." The word occurs very seldom in the Old Testament, and only in one other place in

gers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.

10 [b]The LORD shall reign for ever, *even* thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the LORD. [b] Exod. 15. 18.

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the psalter, viz. cxix. 78. It is used four times in Job. It is observed by Delitzsch that whilst the works of God in providence and in grace are enumerated at length, His judicial administration occupies only one line: one of the numerous indications that whilst He "delights in mercy," judgment is His "strange work."

10. *The* LORD *shall reign*] Or, "Jehovah is King."

Praise ye the LORD] This is the termination as well as the beginning of the whole of this second series of Hallelujah psalms, as of Ps. cxiii. and, with slight variation, of Ps. cxvii. of the former series.

NOTES on PSALM CXLVI. 2, 4.

2. The suffix of the noun differs from the verbal suffix in meaning as well as in form. עוֹדֶנִּי means, "I still am," or, "as yet I am," as in Josh. xiv. 11, and 1 Sam. xx. 14. So בְּעוֹדֶנִּי, Deut. xxxi. 27, means, "whilst I yet am." In these and similar cases the predicate is either expressed or implied, as *e.g.* "yet alive," "yet strong," &c. עוֹד, on the contrary, with the suffix of the noun, whether regarded as a noun or as an adverb, denotes continuous existence, whether past or future, as in Gen. xlviii. 15; Ps. civ. 33; and in this place.

4. The word rendered "his thoughts" in this verse (עשׁתנתיו) occurs only here. It comes from an Aramaic root = Heb. השׁב. A cognate Aramaic verb occurs in Dan. vi. 3, and a cognate Hebrew form occurs in Job xii. 5. Cf. 1 Macc. ii. 63. It is an indication of the late, though not of the Maccabean, date of the psalm.

PSALM CXLVII.

1 *The prophet exhorteth to praise God for his care of the church,* 4 *his power,* 6 *and his mercy:* 7 *to praise him for his providence:* 12 *to praise him for his blessings upon the kingdom,* 15 *for his power over the meteors,* 19 *and for his ordinances in the church.*

PRAISE ye the LORD: for *it is* good to sing praises unto our God; for *it is* pleasant; *and* praise is comely.

2 The LORD doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel.

3 He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their [t]wounds. [t] Heb. *griefs.*

4 He telleth the number of the

PSALM CXLVII.

The liturgical character of this psalm is clearly marked. It celebrates God's sovereign rule over His people, and also His wisdom, His power, and His mercy, as displayed in the works of nature and of providence. This is one of the distinctive characteristics of those psalms which were written subsequently to the captivity, and is probably to be ascribed to the proofs recently given to the Israelites of the vanity of idols and the supreme and all-controlling majesty of Jehovah. More particularly this psalm celebrates the power and goodness of God as displayed in the restoration of the people to their own land, and the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem. This work was not accomplished without much difficulty and danger (Neh. ii.—iv.). When it was completed the Levites were brought up "out of all their places" to Jerusalem, "to keep the dedication with gladness, both with thanksgivings, and with singing, with cymbals, psalteries, and with harps." Neh. xii. 27. A comparison of *vv.* 1, 2, 7, and 12 with Neh. xii. 27, 43 suggests the probability that the psalm may have been composed and recited on the occasion there described.

The LXX. divide the psalm into two parts, of which the second begins at *v.* 12.

It seems to have been composed either towards the beginning of the spring, or at the time of harvest.

1. *Praise ye the* LORD, &c.] The A. V. is consistent with the accents, and defensible both grammatically and by the similar use of *tob*, "good," in Ps. xcii. 2. On the other hand, if the Masoretic accentuation be rejected, as it is by Hupfeld and others, the verse may be translated thus: "Praise ye Jehovah; for it is good: sing (or play upon an instrument) to our God, for it is pleasant; praise is comely." Cf. Pss. xxxiii. 1, xcii. 1, cxxxiii. 1; and cxxxv. 3. See Note at end.

2. *doth build up Jerusalem*] Rather, "is the builder up of Jerusalem." The work was probably just completed.

stars; he calleth them all by *their* names.

5 Great *is* our Lord, and of great power: † his understanding *is* infinite.

† Heb. *of his understanding* there is *no number.*

6 The LORD lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground.

7 Sing unto the LORD with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God:

8 Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.

9 [a] He giveth to the beast his food, *and* to the young ravens which cry.

[a] Job 38. 41. Ps. 104. 27, 28.

10 He delighteth not in the strength of the horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man.

11 The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.

12 Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion.

13 For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; he hath blessed thy children within thee.

† Heb. *Who maketh thy border peace.*

14 † He maketh peace *in* thy bor-

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gathereth together] The Piel form occurs elsewhere only in Ezek. xxii. 21, xxxix. 28; in the latter of which places there is direct allusion to the return from captivity.

the outcasts] Or, "exiles." Cf. Isai. xi. 12, xvi. 4, xxvii. 13, and lvi. 8; LXX. τὰς διασπορὰς. This is one of the many indications of the date of composition of this psalm.

3. *the broken in heart*] Or, "who healeth," &c. Cf. Ps. xxxiv. 18, and Isai. lxi. 1.

4. *He telleth the number of the stars*] Or, "He appoints a number to the stars."

calleth by] Or, "giveth to all their names."

5. *his understanding is infinite*] Lit. "to His understanding there is no number." Cf. Ps. cxlv. 3. The phraseology of this and the preceding verse so closely resembles that of Isai. xl. 26—29 that there can be little doubt that the words of the Prophet were in the mind of the Psalmist. The following clauses may be compared: (1) "He appoints a number to the stars," with "That bringeth out their host by number;" (2) "He calleth them all by names," with "He calleth them all by names;" (3) "Great is our Lord and of great power," with "By the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power;" (4) "His understanding is infinite," with "There is no searching of His understanding."

6. *lifteth up the meek*] Or, "setting upright or firm the oppressed." Cf. Ps. cxlvi. 9. The transition from Jehovah's omnipotence and omniscience, as displayed in the works of nature, to His providential care over His people, is similar to that in Ps. cxlv. 13, 14.

7. *Sing*] Lit. "Answer," *i.e.* antiphonally. Cf. Exod. xv. 21 (and note in loc.), xxxii. 18; 1 S. xviii. 7, xxi. 11. In the last two places the words are rendered, "answer one another," and "sing one to another."

8. *who maketh grass to grow*, &c.] Rather, "Who makes the mountains bring forth grass," *i.e.* without man's cultivation. Cf. Ps. civ. 14. The LXX. add at the end of this verse the words, καὶ χλόην τῇ δουλείᾳ τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

9. *He giveth to the beast his food*, &c.] Cf. Job xxxviii. 41; Pss. civ. 21, 27, 28; cxlv. 15; Joel i. 20. The references to Job throughout this psalm are numerous.

10. *in the strength of the horse*, &c.] Carnal reliance generally is here rebuked. There is probably an allusion to cavalry and infantry, but there seems no direct reference to the prohibition against multiplying horses. Cf. Ps. xxxiii. 16, 17; Prov. xxi. 31.

11. *taketh pleasure in them that fear him*] The same word is used here as in the second clause of the preceding verse, but here the government is direct, and the more literal rendering is, "favoureth them that fear Him." Cf. Pss. lxii. 4, cii. 14.

that hope in his mercy] Rather, "that hope, or wait, for His mercy, or lovingkindness." Cf. Ps. xxxiii. 18.

12. *Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem*] This strophe begins a new psalm in the LXX., of which the subject is the peace and prosperity of the city of Jerusalem, which has risen from its ruins, and of the land of Israel, which is summoned to join with the inhabitants of the city in the praise of Jehovah. The verb rendered "praise," or, rather, "praise aloud," is used in the psalter in this form and signification only in Pss. lxiii. 4, cxviii. 1, and cxlv. 4. It occurs also in Ps. lxxxix. 10, but in a different signification.

13. *For he hath strengthened*, &c.] The walls of the city were now rebuilt, and its gates duly closed and barred by night. See Neh. vii. 3.

14. *He maketh peace in thy borders*] Rather, "Who maketh thy border peace." Cf. Isai. lx. 17.

the finest of the wheat] Lit. "the fat of wheat." The original blessing of peace and

† Heb. *fat of wheat.*

ders, *and* filleth thee with the †finest of the wheat.

15 He sendeth forth his commandment *upon* earth: his word runneth very swiftly.

16 He giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoar frost like ashes.

17 He casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold?

18 He sendeth out his word, and melteth them: he causeth his wind to blow, *and* the waters flow.

† Heb. *his words.*

19 He sheweth †his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel.

20 He hath not dealt so with any nation: and *as for his* judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the LORD.

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plenty is now renewed. Cf. Deut. xxxii. 13, 14; Ps. lxxxi. 16. As in *v.* 13 allusion is made to the security of the city, so in *v.* 14 allusion is made to the prosperity of the land; both Jerusalem and Zion having been summoned in *v.* 12 to unite in praising the Lord.

15. *He sendeth forth his commandment*, &c.] Rather, "Who sendeth forth, &c." Cf. Gen. i. 3; also Pss. xxxiii. 9, cvii. 20, where see note.

16. *He giveth snow like wool*] Rather, "Who giveth snow like wool." The meaning may be either that the snow is like wool as to whiteness (cf. Isai. i. 18); or, that the flakes of snow cover the earth like a woollen garment. Cf. Job xxxvii. 6.

he scattereth the hoar frost like ashes] Cf. Job xxxviii. 29. The paronomasia is lost in the translation.

17. *He casteth forth his ice like morsels*] Or, "casting forth His hail," &c. The morsels or pieces seem to refer to the hailstones or sleet. Cf. Job xxxvii. 10.

18. *He sendeth out his word*] This is one of the passages in which the Word of Jehovah has been supposed to mean our Lord Jesus Christ. Cf. Pss. xxxiii. 4, cvii. 20, cxix. 89, 105. It seems more probable, however, that "word" here is equivalent to "command," as in *v.* 15. Cf. Ps. cxlviii. 8.

19. *He sheweth his word*] The Keri has, "His words;" those "lively oracles," in the possession of which the Jews had the advantage over all the other nations of the earth. Cf. Rom. iii. 1, 2.

20. *He hath not dealt so*] Cf. Deut. iv. 7, 32—41.

NOTE on PSALM CXLVII. 1.

There is much difficulty in determining the right division of the several clauses of this verse. The analogy of Ps. cxxxv. 3 would lead us to regard טוב as a predicate of Jehovah; but in this case it would seem to follow that נעים must also be so regarded. Whilst, however, נעים does not appear to be used of God, it is used in Ps. cxxv. 3 in connection with זמרו, and in Ps. cxxxiii. 1 טוב and נעים are found in conjunction. The form of the word זַמְּרָה creates another difficulty. According to the A.V. it must be regarded as the Piel Inf. with ה paragog. It may be taken as the Imp. Piel with ה paragog. (cf. Lev. xxvi. 18), but in this case the transition from the pl. to the sing. is harsh. Hupfeld refers to another reading and accentuation, אזמרה, the Athnach of the following word being transposed to נעים, and he appeals to Ps. cxlv. 6 for the transition of person. He prefers, however, to read זמרו, as in *v.* 7 (cf. Ps. cxxxv. 3).

PSALM CXLVIII.

1 *The psalmist exhorteth the celestial,* 7 *the terrestrial,* 11 *and the rational creatures to praise God.*

† Heb. *Hallelujah.*

†PRAISE ye the LORD. Praise ye the LORD from the heavens: praise him in the heights.

2 Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.

3 Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.

4 Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that *be* above the heavens.

PSALM CXLVIII.

In this magnificent Anthem, which exhibits in a striking manner the majesty and the wide compass, as well as the nationality, of the Hebrew worship, all creation, both in heaven and on earth, is summoned to unite in the praise of the Creator. The invitation addressed to the inanimate creation to join in

5 Let them praise the name of the LORD: for he commanded, and they were created.

6 He hath also stablished them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass.

7 Praise the LORD from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps:

8 Fire, and hail; snow, and vapours; stormy wind fulfilling his word:

9 Mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars:

10 Beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and †flying fowl:

11 Kings of the earth, and all peo-

† Heb. *birds of wing.*

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the universal chorus, is a prophetic anticipation of that day in which the whole of the creation which is now "groaning and travailing in pain together," beneath the influence of the curse, shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption and brought into "the glorious liberty of the children of God." Rom. viii. 18. Cf. also Isai. xxxv. 1, 2, xliv. 23, xlix. 13, lii. 9, lv. 12, 13.

The psalm is divided into two nearly equal parts, of which the former (*vv.* 1—6) relates to the heavenly, and the latter (*vv.* 7—12) to the earthly Hallelujah. In both parts the ground of the exhortation to praise is expressed. In the one case it is that, at the word of God, the heavenly hosts were created, and that to His decree they are subject. In the other case it is that the Name of Jehovah alone is highly exalted, and that it has pleased Him to raise up "an horn of salvation" for His people.

Vv. 13, 14 are connected with *vv.* 7—12, as 5, 6 with 1—4.

The points of connection with the preceding and following psalms are numerous. The key-note of the song of praise is struck in Ps. cxlv. 10, and the "works" of Jehovah there mentioned collectively, are here specified separately. *V.* 14, "a people near unto Him," may be compared with cxlvii. 19, 20, and both with cxlvi. 10.

1. *from the heavens*] Or, "of the heavens," *i.e.* "O ye of the heavens!" The call to praise, instead of beginning from the earth and rising to heaven, begins with the higher sphere of creation, and is afterwards extended to our lower world.

2. *all his hosts*] Both the heavenly bodies and the angels are represented in the Old Testament as "the hosts" of the Lord; the former in Deut. iv. 19, the latter in Josh. v. 14; 1 K. xxii. 19, and Job xxxviii. 7. Both may be included under a common designation in this verse, but the parallelism suggests that the angels are here primarily, if not exclusively, contemplated (cf. Pss. xxix. 1, ciii. 20). In *v.* 3 the heavenly bodies are specified.

4. *heavens of heavens*] Cf. Gen. i. 6, where see note; also Deut. x. 14; 1 K. viii. 27; Ps. lxviii. 33 (in all of which cases both words are in the plural number in the Heb.).

5. *he commanded, and they were created*] Cf. Ps. xxxiii. 6. The LXX. interpolate a clause before these words, *αὐτὸς εἶπε καὶ ἐγεννήθησαν.* So also the Prayer-Book Version.

6. *He hath also stablished them for ever and ever*] Cf. Ps. cxi. 8, which is the only place in which the words rendered "for ever and ever" occur in precisely the same form. A similar expression occurs Isai. xxx. 8.

he hath made a decree which shall not pass] Rather, "He gave them a decree (cf. Job xxviii. 26; Ps. xcix. 7; Jer. xxxi. 35, 36, xxxiii. 25); and not (one) transgresses (it)." Cf. Job xiv. 5; Ps. civ. 9; Jer. v. 22 (where the accus. suffix is added); also Esther i. 19, ix. 27. The verb rendered "pass," when used in connection with bounds or laws, seems to denote their transgression. God has engraven a law on all His works in nature which regulates their mutual relations, and none of them transgresses it. There is authority, however, for the A.V. Thus the LXX., *καὶ οὐ παρελεύσεται.* Jer., "et non præteribit." Cf. Ps. cxliv. 4.

7. *from the earth*] Or, "(O ye) of the earth!" Cf. *v.* 1. This corresponds to the words in *v.* 1, "from (or, of) the heavens;" and expresses, as implied in the A.V., the place from whence the praise is to proceed.

ye dragons] The word denotes any large water-animals. See note on Gen. i. 21. Cf. Ps. lxxiv. 13.

8. *Fire, and hail; snow, and vapours*] The word rendered "fire" may here denote lightning. Cf. Ex. xix. 18; also Ps. cv. 32, where, as here, it is found in conjunction with "hail." The word rendered "vapours" commonly denotes "smoke" arising from fire, whether kindled in an ordinary manner (Ps. cxix. 83), or by lightning, or by volcanic or any other extraordinary agency. Cf. Gen. xix. 28. The four words are arranged in a somewhat peculiar manner; fire and smoke standing to each other in a reciprocal relation, as also hail and snow. These latter are of comparatively rare occurrence in Palestine.

fulfilling his word] Cf. Ps. ciii. 20.

9. *fruitful trees*] Rather, "fruit-bearing trees," as distinguished from trees of the forest, of which the cedar is the representative. Cf. Gen. i. 11.

10. *Beasts, and all cattle*] The former

ple; princes, and all judges of the earth:

12 Both young men, and maidens; old men, and children:

13 Let them praise the name of the LORD: for his name alone is † excellent; his glory *is* above the earth and heaven.

† Heb. *exalted.*

14 He also exalteth the horn of his people, the praise of all his saints; *even* of the children of Israel, a people near unto him. Praise ye the LORD.

PSALM CXLIX.

1 *The prophet exhorteth to praise God for his love to the church,* 5 *and for that power which he hath given to the church.*

† PRAISE ye the LORD. Sing unto the LORD a new song, *and* his praise in the congregation of saints.

† Heb. *Hallelujah.*

2 Let Israel rejoice in him that

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of the two words here employed denotes specially wild beasts, the latter domestic cattle.

11. *Kings of the earth*, &c.] As in the invocation to praise Jehovah "from the heavens" the Psalmist begins with the angels, and ends with the waters above the heavens, so, inversely, in the invocation to praise Jehovah "from the earth," the Psalmist begins with the inanimate creation, and ends with man, the noblest of God's works.

13. *above the earth and heaven*] From both of which His praise is to proceed. Cf. Ps. lvii. 5.

14. *He also exalteth the horn of his people*] Or, "And He hath raised (or lifted) up a horn for His people." Cf. Ps. cxxxii. 17; also Luke i. 69. During the period of the captivity Israel had lost its horn or pre-eminence. The A.V., however, is supported by the LXX.; Καὶ ὑψώσει κέρας λαοῦ αὐτοῦ, and by Jer., "et exaltavit cornu populi sui."

the praise of all his saints] These words may be understood grammatically in two ways. They may mean that the Lord Himself is the praise of His people, as in Deut. x. 21; Jer. xvii. 14; or, as seems more probable, they may mean that the restoration of the horn to His people is the occasion of praise, as in this psalm (or, in New Testament language, "for a praise," εἰς ἔπαινον), to all His saints. Cf. Ephes. i. 6, 12, 14; Phil. i. 11, and 1 Pet. i. 7. The latter explanation is in harmony with the construction of Ps. cxlix. 9. The former is supported by the LXX., ὕμνος πᾶσι τοῖς ὁσίοις αὐτοῦ, and by Jer., "laus omnibus sanctis ejus."

a people near unto him] Lit. "the people of His nearness." Cf. Lev. x. 3; Deut. iv. 7. It is in this capacity, as a people brought very near to Jehovah, that Israel, as represented in the person of the Psalmist, strikes the key-note in this psalm of that song of praise in which all creation, animate and inanimate, shall hereafter join.

PSALM CXLIX.

This psalm appears to have been composed by the same writer as the other psalms of this Hallelujah series. Its applicability to the circumstances of the Jews at the time of the restoration is not so obvious as in some other psalms of the same period. It is not unreasonable, however, to suppose that though constrained for a time to act only on the defensive, the restored Israelites may have indulged sanguine expectations of future victories over their heathen adversaries. But whatever the character, or the occasion, of those emotions which inspired the breast of the Psalmist, there can be little doubt that this psalm, like those passages in which mention is made of "a new song" (see note on Ps. xcviii. 1), has reference to the days of the Messiah, and to His final victories over all opposing foes.

When this psalm is compared with the parallel prophecies of Isaiah, and of the Apocalypse, the difficulty which exists in its interpretation will be greatly diminished, if not removed; and its reference will appear to be to those signal judgments, foretold alike in the Old and in the New Testament, which will usher in the coming of the great day of the Lord, when His enemies must perish at His presence, and His "people shall be willing in the day of His power." (Cf. Ps. cx. and also the notes on *vv.* 8, 9 of this psalm.)

1. *a new song*] See notes on Pss. xxxiii. 3, and xcviii. 1. The period of the restoration, an event which stirred the deepest emotions of the nation, was one, though perhaps the least remarkable, of the epochs of the revival of the lyric poetry of the Hebrews.

in the congregation of saints] This is one of the connecting links with the preceding psalm (*v.* 14). The word rendered "saints" occurs three times in this psalm. The harps which had long hung upon the willows of Babylon were once more employed in the liturgical worship of the rebuilt temple.

2. *in him that made him*] The word rendered, in the A.V., "that made him" (lit. "his Makers"), as it stands in the received Hebrew text, is in the plural number, as in Job xxxv. 10, and Isai. liv. 5. It seems to refer rather to the selection and constitution of Israel as the people of Jehovah, than to the act of creation (cf. Isai. xliv. 2, li. 13;

made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.

3 Let them praise his name [1] in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp.

4 For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation.

5 Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds.

6 *Let* the high *praises* of God *be* [2] in their mouth, and a twoedged sword in their hand;

7 To execute vengeance upon the heathen, *and* punishments upon the people;

8 To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;

9 [a] To execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD.

[1] Or, *with the pipe.*

[2] Heb. *in their throat.*

[a] Deut. 7. 1.

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and see note on Ps. c. 3). By the restoration from Babylon, Israel had been appropriated anew in this special character.

in their King] The Theocratic king no longer existed, and the Lord their God had become again their King. Deut. xxxiii. 5; 1 S. xii. 12.

3. *in the dance*] The Hebrew word (*mahol*), if rightly translated (as it seems to be, though some understand it of the pipe or flute), is used specially with reference to the sacred dance. Cf. Exod. xv. 20; Judg. xi. 34, xxi. 21; also Jer. xxxi. 4, a prophecy of the restoration, "Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets (the plural of the same noun which is rendered "timbrel" in this verse; cf. Ps. cl. 4, where mention is again made of the *timbrel* in connection with *mahol*), and thou shalt go forth in the dances (sing. in Heb.) of them that make merry." Cf. *v.* 13 of the same chap.; also Ps. xxx. 11 and note. In the prophecy of the restoration from the captivity in Jeremiah xxx. and xxxi:, the annunciation of the vengeance which was about to be executed upon the wicked is connected, as in this psalm, with the joy and exultation of Israel. Cf. xxx. 23, 24.

let them sing praises] Rather, "let them make melody unto Him," &c.

4. *For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people*] Cf. cxlvii. 11.

he will beautify, &c.] Or, "He beautifies (or makes glorious) the oppressed (or afflicted) with deliverance." The verb occurs in no other place in the psalter. It is chiefly used by Isaiah. Cf. lv. 5, lx. 9.

5. *Let the saints be joyful in glory*] Rather, "with glory," or "because of glory," *i. e.* the glory conferred upon them, or promised to them. Cf. Hag. ii. 9. In the place of "howling upon their beds" (Hos. vii. 14), God now gives to them "songs in the night" (Job xxxv. 10). Cf. Ps. xlii. 8; Isai. xxx. 29. This and the following clauses may be rendered either as in the A.V., or in the present tense thus; "are joyful," "they sing aloud," "the high praises (lit. the exaltations, not used elsewhere, cf. Pss. lxvi. 17, xcix. 5, 9) of God are in their mouth, and a two-edged sword is in their hand." The words rendered "a two-edged sword" may be translated more literally "a sword of mouths," *i. e.* edges. Cf. Neh. iv. 17, "Every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon;" also 2 Macc. xv. 27, "So that fighting with their hands, and praying unto God with their hearts, they slew no less than thirty and five thousand men."

7. *upon the heathen*] Rather, "upon," or "amongst, the nations."

upon the people] Rather, "upon," or "amongst, the peoples."

8. *To bind their kings with chains*] Cf. the passages cited in the note on *v.* 9, also Isai. xlix. 7, 23, lx. 3, ff., where the subjugation predicted is moral not physical, and consists in the surrender of idolatry, and the reception of the true faith.

9. *To execute upon them*, &c.] Or, "amongst them." "The judgment (or decree) written" may look back, in the first instance, to the sentence of extermination pronounced on the Canaanites, but it seems to refer, not so much to any one particular passage, as to the immutable decree of God, registered in heaven, and thus "written before Him" (cf. Isai. lxv. 6), and expressed also in the whole of the prophecies, more especially those of Isaiah, which predict the universal dominion of Jehovah, and the complete subjugation of His adversaries, in connection with the glory and exaltation of Israel. Thus *e. g.* in Isai. xlv. 14, captives of different nations are represented as coming over to the restored Jews in chains (the same word as in *v.* 8); in ch. lx. *vv.* 2, 3, the nations with their kings are described as coming to the light of Israel; in *v.* 11, it is foretold that "the forces of the Gentiles," and "their kings," shall be brought within the gates of Jerusalem; whilst in ch. lix. 16—19, the vengeance of *v.* 7 is represented as being executed. With these passages may be

PSALM CL.

1 An exhortation to praise God, 3 with all kind of instruments.

† Heb. *Halle-lujah.*

† PRAISE ye the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power.

2 Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness.

3 Praise him with the sound of the ‖ trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp. ‖ Or, *cornet.*

4 Praise him with the timbrel and ‖ dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs. ‖ Or, *pipe.*

5 Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.

6 Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.

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compared Deut. xxxii. 40—43, and Isai. lxv. 6; also Rev. xiv. 20, xvii. 14.

this honour have all his saints] This clause may be rendered grammatically in either of the following ways: (1) it may mean, "He (the Lord) is a (or the) honour of all His saints;" *i.e.* He, Who at His first coming had "no form nor comeliness" (the same word which is here rendered "honour"), will become the honour of His saints when He shall come again to exalt them, and to take vengeance upon their adversaries; or (2) it may mean, "it is an honour to all His saints;" *i.e.* the destruction of their adversaries, and their own deliverance, will become a crown of glory to the people of the Lord. Cf. cxlviii. 14, and note. The latter interpretation seems to be the true one. "The victories of their King," says Dr Kay, "reflect glory on all His faithful and devoted servants."

PSALM CL.

As each of the five books of the psalter ends with its doxology, so the entire "Book of Praises" ends with this magnificent song of thanksgiving, in which not only the people of Israel with all their national instrumental music, but the whole of the animate creation, "every thing that hath breath," is summoned to unite. See Introduction to the Psalms, sec. 2.

"It was, no doubt," writes Isaac Taylor, "to give effect first to the human voice, and then, to the alternations of instruments—loud, and tender, and gay, with the graceful movements of the dance, that the anthem was composed, and its chorus brought out—

'Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord: Praise ye the Lord!'

and so did the congregated thousands take up their part with a shout—'even as the noise of many waters.'" 'The Spirit of the Hebrew Poetry,' pp. 156, 7.

This universal Hallelujah forms the most suitable conclusion to a book in which cries from the deep are, throughout, blended with songs of praise; in other words, which describes the experience of God's people throughout the whole of the various vicissitudes of their earthly history.

"There is now no need," says Delitzsch in loc., "for any special closing *beracha* (*i.e.* blessing). This whole closing psalm is such. Nor is there any need even of an *Amen* (Ps. cvi. 48; cf. 1 Chro. xvi. 36). The *Hallelujah* includes it within itself and exceeds it."

1. *in his sanctuary*] If the sanctuary here denotes the earthly temple of Jehovah (cf. Ps. xv. 1), this verse may be regarded as a short summary of Ps. cxlviii. If the heavenly sanctuary be denoted, as in Ps. xi. 4, we must consider the summons to praise as addressed to the angelic hosts. The word may, however, be rendered "for," or "on account of, His holiness," as the same preposition is commonly understood in the following verse. Cf. Ps. lx. 6, and note in loc.

in the firmament of his power] *i.e.* where His might and majesty are displayed. Cf. Ps. lxviii. 34, 35.

2. *for his mighty acts*] Or, "in, *i.e.* in the recital of, His mighty acts;" as *e.g.* the Exodus, the Restoration from Babylon, and, finally, the ultimate deliverance foretold in the preceding psalm.

according to his excellent greatness] Rather, "according to the abundance of his greatness."

3. *sound of the trumpet*] Or, "blast of the horn." For the distinction between the construction and use of the ram's horn, and the straight silver trumpet, see note on Num. x. 2.

4. *timbrel and dance*] The timbrel, or tambourine, was the chief instrumental accompaniment of the dance; cf. Exod. xv. 20; Judg. xi. 34, also Ps. cxlix. 3. The word rendered "dance" may, however, denote a musical instrument. See Ps. cxlix. 3, and note.

with stringed instruments] See Note at end.

and organs] Rather, "and pipe."

5. *loud cymbals.....high sounding cymbals*] Rather, "cymbals of clear sound.....cymbals of loud noise." The latter word seems to denote a loud sound as of an alarm or signal trumpet, as in Lev. xxv. 9, and Num. xxxi. 6. Cf. Num. x. 5; and Ps. xcviii. 6, and notes in loc.; also 1 Cor. xiii. 1, κύμβαλον ἀλαλάζον.

6. *Let every thing that hath breath*] Lit.

"the whole of breath," *i.e.* all living beings. Cf. Gen. ii. 7; Deut. xx. 16; Josh. x. 40. The last verse of the psalter is a summons addressed no longer to Israel only (as the mention of their national instruments in the preceding verses might seem to imply), but to the whole of the human creation (to which the word here used generally applies), and, it may be, to the whole animate creation, to unite in the praise of Jehovah.

NOTE on Psalm cl. 4.

The meaning of the word מְנִּים rendered "stringed instruments" is doubtful. A corresponding Syriac word ܡܢܢ is used in Ps. xxxii. 2, as =כִּנּוֹר, and the context suggests that it may denote some specific musical instrument in this place, especially inasmuch as two stringed instruments are mentioned in the preceding verse. Fürst suggests that מְנִּים may be a contracted form derived from נָעַם. Cf. Ps. xlv. 8, where מִנְּנִי occurs, and note in loc.

EXCURSUS UPON PSALMS XCI.—C.

FREQUENT reference has been made in the notes on Pss. xci.—c., and more particularly in the notes on Pss. xciii., xcvi., and xcviii., to their mutual connection, and their common dependence upon the prophecies, especially the *later* prophecies, of Isaiah. The indications of mutual connection and common authorship, with regard at least to several of these psalms, are traced mainly in the identity or similarity of the subject-matter, in their adaptation for liturgical use, in the frequent recurrence of the same or similar words and phrases, in the general resemblance of style, in the characteristic use of *anadiplosis* or *iteration*, and in the facts that Ps. xciii. is a part of Ps. xcii. in twelve Codices, that Ps. xcv. is joined to Ps. xciv. in nine Codices, that Ps. xcvi. is a part of Ps. xcv. in four Codices, that Ps. xcvii. is a part of Ps. xcvi. in fourteen Codices, and that Ps. xcix. is united with Ps. xcviii. in eight Codices. The results arising out of this mutual connection, and more particularly out of the common dependence of these psalms upon the prophecies of Isaiah, are of so much interest and importance, that it has been thought desirable to trace out more fully the nature and extent of the coincidences of subject, style, and phraseology between these psalms and the prophecies, both earlier and later, of Isaiah; and to endeavour to ascertain, approximately, the date to which the composition of this series of psalms may be assigned.

The following table of coincidences will suffice to shew that if the psalms and the prophecies were not the compositions of the same writer, the Psalmist must have borrowed from the Prophet, or the Prophet from the Psalmist.

(1)

Psalm xciii. 1,	compared with	Isaiah xxiv. 23.
יהוה מלך		כי מלך יהוה צבאות בהר ציון
"Jehovah is King."		"When (or for) Jehovah of Hosts is King (or has begun to reign) in Mount Sion."
The same words which form the key-note of this series of psalms are repeated in Pss. xcvi. 10, xcvii. 1, and xcix. 1, coupled, in the place last quoted, with the declaration that "Jehovah is great in Zion."		And lii. 7, אמר לציון מלך אלהיך, "Say unto Zion, Thy God is King." Cf. xxxii. 1, xxxiii. 17, 22.

(2)

Psalm xciii. 1,	compared with	Isaiah li. 9.
לבש יהוה עז התאזר		לבשי עז זרוע יהוה
"Jehovah hath clothed Himself, hath girded Himself, with strength."		"Clothe Thyself with strength, O arm of Jehovah." Cf. lii. 1 :— לבשי עזך "Clothe Thyself with Thy strength, O Zion."

(3)

Psalms xcvi. 1, xcviii. 1,	compared with	Isaiah xlii. 10.
שירו ליהוה שיר חדש		שירו ליהוה שיר חדש
"Sing unto Jehovah a new song."		"Sing unto Jehovah a new song."

(4)

Ps. xcviii. 7, compared with Isaiah xlii. 10.

הים ומלאו ... תבל ויושבי

"The sea and its fulness, the earth and the inhabitants thereof."

הים ומלאו ... איים ויושביהם

"The sea and its fulness, the islands and the inhabitants thereof."

Also xcvi. 11,

הים ומלאו

"The sea and its fulness."

Cf. xxxiv. 1: הארץ ומלאה

"The earth and its fulness."

(5)

Psalm xcvi. 11, compared with Isaiah xlix. 13.

ישמחו השמים ותגל הארץ

"The heavens are glad, and the earth is joyful."
Cf. xcvii. 1.

רנו שמים וגילי ארץ

"Sing, O heavens, and be joyful, O earth."
Cf. xliv. 23.

(6)

Psalm xcvii. 5, compared with Isaiah xxxiv. 3.

הרים ... נמסו

"The mountains are melted."

נמסו הרים

"The mountains are melted."

(7)

Psalm xcviii. 1, compared with Isaiah lii. 10.

זרוע קדשו

"His holy arm."

זרוע קדשו

"His holy arm."

This phrase occurs in no other place.

(8)

Psalm xcviii. 3, compared with Isaiah lii. 10.

ראו כל אפסי ארץ את ישועת אלהינו

"All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God."

וראו כל אפסי ארץ את ישועת אלהינו

"And all the ends of the earth shall see (or have seen) the salvation of our God."

(9)

Psalm xcviii. 4, compared with Isaiah lii. 9.

פצחו ורננו

"Break forth into a shout and sing."

פצחו רננו

"Break forth into a shout, sing."

It should be observed here that the verb פצח in the sense of "break out into a shout" or "cry of joy" (*e.g.* Isai. liv. 1, where the LXX. has *ῥῆξον καὶ βόησον*, cf. Gal. iv. 27), is absolutely peculiar to the prophet Isaiah (who uses it six times in his earlier and later prophecies in this sense), and to the Psalmist in this place; and that the verb is invariably used by the Prophet, as it is here by the Psalmist, in conjunction with the verb רנן, or its cognate noun רנה. The word itself occurs, but in a different form and signification, in one other place only in the Old Testament, viz., Micah iii. 3.

(10)

Psalm xcviii. 5, compared with Isaiah li. 3.

קול זמרה — קול זמרה

"The voice of a psalm (or song)." "The voice of a psalm (or song)."

This phrase occurs in no other place.

(11)

Psalm xcviii. 8, compared with Isaiah lv. 12.

ימחאו כף — ימחאו כף

"Clap their hands." "Clap their hands."

This phrase occurs in no other place.

(12)

Psalm xcix. 3, 5, 9, compared with Isaiah vi. 3.

קדוש הוא
5 קדוש הוא
9 קדוש יהוה אלהינו

קדוש קדוש קדוש יהוה צבאות

"Holy is He... Holy is He... Holy is Jehovah our God." "Holy, Holy, Holy, is Jehovah of Hosts."

(13)

Psalm xcix. 5, compared with Isaiah lxvi. 1.

הדום רגליו — הדום רגלי

"The footstool of His feet." "The footstool of My feet."

The expression occurs only in four other places in the Old Testament, of which three seem to refer to the Ark, viz. Ps. cxxxii. 7; Lam. ii. 1; and 1 Chro. xxviii. 2.

The coincidences of Ps. xcviii. with the prophecies of Isaiah will be presented to the eye of the English reader most conveniently in the following form:—

Psalm xcviii.	compared with the prophecies of Isaiah.
"*O sing unto the Lord a new song.*" *v.* 1.	"*O sing unto the Lord a new song.*" xlii. 10.
"His right-hand and *His holy arm hath wrought deliverance for Him.*" *v.* 2.	"*His arm wrought deliverance for Him.*" lix. 16. "*Mine arm hath wrought deliverance for Me.*" lxiii. 5. "Jehovah hath made bare *His holy arm.*" lii. 10.
"He hath *remembered His lovingkindness* and His truth *toward the house of Israel.*" *v.* 3.	"I will make mention of (or *remember*) the *lovingkindnesses* of Jehovah.... and the great goodness *toward the house of Israel*.... according to the multitude of *His lovingkindnesses.*" lxiii. 7.
"*All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.*" *v.* 3.	"*All the ends of the earth shall see* (or *have seen*) *the salvation of our God.*" lii. 10.
"*Shout aloud* unto Jehovah, all *the earth; break forth* and *sing joyously;* yea, sing praise." *v.* 4.	"*Sing joyously*, O heavens, for Jehovah hath done it; *shout aloud*, ye lower parts of *the earth; break forth*, O ye mountains, into *a joyous song.*" xliv. 23.
"*And the voice of a psalm.*" *v.* 5.	"*And the voice of a psalm.*" li. 3.

Psalm xcviii.	compared with	the prophecies of Isaiah.
"*Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof:* the *world*, and they that *dwell* therein." *v.* 7.		"*The sea, and the fulness thereof:* the isles, and those who inhabit (or *dwell* in) them." xlii. 10. (Cf. "the earth and *the fulness thereof*, the *world*[1], and all things that come forth of it." xxxiv. 1.)
"Let the floods *clap their hands*." *v.* 8.		"All the trees of the field *shall clap their hands*." lv. 12.
"Let the *mountains sing joyously* together." *v.* 8.		"The *mountains* and the hills break forth before you into *joyous singing*." lv. 12.
"He shall *judge* the world with *righteousness* and the peoples with equity." *v.* 9.		"And He shall *judge* the poor with *righteousness* and reprove with *equity*." xi. 4. Cf. lix. 4.

Amongst other coincidences between this series of psalms and the prophecies of Isaiah, we may note the following:—

(1) The use of the Piel form of נאה in the sense of *to be beautiful* or *becoming*. Cf. Ps. xciii. 5 with Isai. lii. 7. The *verb* appears to be used elsewhere only in the Song of Solomon, i. 10.

(2) The expression מאז, "from of old, everlasting," Ps. xciii. 2, a word which, though not exclusively used by Isaiah, is characteristic of his style, being used eight times in his earlier and later prophecies, and very rarely elsewhere.

(3) The use of תנחומים, "consolations." Cf. Ps. xciv. 19, 20; Isai. lxvi. 11. The masc. form occurs elsewhere only in Jer. xvi. 7, and the fem. form only in Job xv. 11, and xxi. 2.

(4) The use of some form of the verb שעע, or its cognate noun, in the sense of *delight*. Cf. Ps. xciv. 19, 20; Isai. v. 7, and lxvi. 12. The occurrence of any form of this word except in Ps. cxix. is very rare.

(5) The coincidence of יתאמרו, Ps. xciv. 4, with תתימרו, Isaiah lxi. 6. Whether the latter word be a derivative from אמר, or from ימר (see Fürst, 'Lex.'), is questioned; but the resemblance is remarkable, as the meaning is apparently the same.

We may note further (a) the use of שפט in conjunction with צדק, אמונה, and מישרים (cf. Pss. xcvi. 13, xcvii. 9; Isai. xi. 4, 5, lix. 4); (b) Ps. xcvii. 3, as compared with Isai. xlii. 25; (c) Ps. xcix. 1, ישב כרובים, as compared with Isai. xxxvii. 16, ישב הכרבים; (d) Ps. xcix. 1, תנוט הארץ, as compared with Isai. xxiv. 19, 20. Probably the true reading of the psalm is תנוע or תמוט.

Among other peculiarities more or less striking, we may observe the usage both by the Psalmist and the Prophet of the following words: (1) דבא and its cognate forms, Pss. xciii. 3, xciv. 5; Isai. iii. 15, xix. 10, liii. 5, 10, lvii. 15; (2) the Hiphil form of שקט Ps. xciv. 13; Isai. vii. 4, xxx. 15, xxxii. 17, lvii. 20; (3) תפארת Ps. xcvi. 6, a word used seventeen times by Isaiah; (4) רגז Ps. xcix. 1, a word which occurs eleven times in its different forms in Isaiah; (5) פעל in conjunction with מעשה Ps. xcii. 4; Isai. v. 12; and (6) מרום Pss. xcii. 9, xciii. 4, a word which occurs fourteen times in Isaiah.

It would be easy to adduce other coincidences of phraseology between this series of psalms and the prophecies of Isaiah, but it is believed that the above will suffice to establish either the identity of authorship, or the dependence of the Psalmist upon the Prophet, or of the Prophet upon the Psalmist. Before proceeding farther in the investigation of this subject, it will be desirable to present to the reader in a connected form the principal internal indications which these psalms afford of the date of their composition, some of which have been already noticed in their respective places.

It is generally agreed amongst modern critics that the principal epochs of Hebrew poetry (and it will scarcely admit of question that this series of psalms belongs to one of such epochs) were (1) the time of David; (2) that of Hezekiah; and (3) the period of, or shortly subsequent to, the captivity; to which periods some modern critics, though, as it seems, on insufficient evidence (see the Introduction to the Psalter, sec. 13), add that of the Maccabees.

[1] The word rendered *world*, which occurs only thirty-six times in the Old Testament, is found nine times in the earlier prophecies of Isaiah, and six times in this series of psalms.

The following reasons seem to determine the balance of evidence to be in favour of the composition of this series of psalms at, or about, the second of these periods, *i. e.* during the time of the prophet Isaiah.

(1) We not only miss all those allusions to the times and circumstances of the captivity and the restoration which are found in the psalms of later date[1], and also those words and forms which characterize alike the earliest and the latest books of the Hebrew Scriptures, but we find such allusions to the Ark with its overshadowing cherubim (cf. Pss. xci. 1, 4, xcv. 2, 6, xcvi. 6, xcix. 1, 5, c. 2), and probably to the monarchy (Ps. xcix. 4, and note in loc.) as find their obvious and natural explanation in the supposition that these psalms were composed whilst the temple of Solomon still stood, and whilst the royal house of David still continued to sit upon the throne.

(2) The state of Judæa with regard to the prospect of foreign invasion, as described in these psalms, corresponds closely with that of the reign of Ahaz and the first fourteen years of that of Hezekiah. "The floods," a figure of the world-powers both in the Old and the New Testament, are represented in Ps. xciii. 3 not only as having lifted up their voice, but as still lifting it up. "The floods *have lifted up*, O Lord, the floods *have lifted up*, the floods *do lift up* their waves." This description precisely accords with that given in Isai. viii. 7, when, after the invasion and partial subjugation of the northern kingdom by the Assyrians, and the threatened invasion of Judæa by the united forces of Israel and Syria, the Assyrian power is represented as threatening not only Israel but also Judah: "Now therefore behold the Lord bringeth up upon thee the waters of the river strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory[2]." The same description applies, though not, perhaps, in an equal degree, to the state of Judæa from the arrival of the messengers of Merodach-baladan, until the final destruction of the monarchy, after which time the figure of the rising and threatening floods would seem to be altogether inapplicable.

(3) The internal disorganization of Judæa described in Ps. xciv. *vv.* 5, 6, 16, 20, 21, corresponds very closely with that described in 2 Chro. xxix. 8, 9, and in Isai. i. (whatever the date of the composition of that chapter), iii. 12, 15, ix. 13, and x. 1, 2. The acts of injustice and oppression to which reference is made in Ps. xciv. (and to which there may be allusion, by way of contrast, in Ps. xcix. 4) appear to be primarily, if not exclusively, those of unrighteous judges, not of foreign oppressors. The Psalmist animadverts upon these with a severity similar to that of the Prophet, one of whose characteristics was the keen eye with which he surveyed the judicial administration of the affairs of his country. (See notes on *vv.* 5, 6, 8, 20, of Ps. xciv.)

(4) The subject-matter of these psalms, viz., the establishment of Jehovah's throne in righteousness, the confusion of idolaters, and the universal proclamation of "the gospel of the kingdom," is identical with the subject-matter of some of the confessedly genuine prophecies of Isaiah, as well as with that of those prophecies which are contained in chapters xl.—lxvi., the genuineness of which has been the subject of dispute in modern times. No more probable date, therefore, so far as respects the subjects on which they treat, can be assigned to these psalms than the time of the prophet Isaiah, which was the second great epoch of those royal prophecies which had their origin in the days of Samuel and David. This probability is confirmed by a comparison of the jubilant strain of these psalms, and of the contemporaneous (as it is thought) prophecies of Isaiah, descriptive of the Second Advent, with the darker and more minatory character of the greater portion of those prophecies, relating to the same event, which were delivered subsequently to the Babylonish captivity. Cf. *e. g.* Zech. xii. 10—14, xiv. passim; Malachi iii. 2, 3, iv. 5, 6, with Isai. xii. passim, xxv. 9, xxvi. 19. The improbability of the composition of these psalms between the time of Isaiah and the captivity, not excepting even the period of Josiah's reign, is generally admitted.

(5) The repeated allusions to convulsions of the earth throughout this series of psalms (cf. Pss. xciii. 2, xcvi. 10, xcvii. 4, 5, xcix. 1) find their most natural historical groundwork in the great earthquake in the days of king Uzziah (cf. Amos i. 1; Mic. i. 4; Zech. xiv. 5).

(6) The indications found in these psalms of the restoration of the temple-service (cf. xcv. 2, xcvi. 8, xcviii. 5, 6, c. 2) exactly harmonize with the great revival of national religious worship, including both vocal and instrumental music, in the days of king Hezekiah, in the account of which in 2 Chro.

[1] *E.g.* in such a psalm as xcix. we should naturally expect to find some allusion to the restoration from captivity, had it been composed after that event, and not improbably the mention of Daniel as well as Samuel, amongst those who called upon the name of the Lord.

[2] It must be noted here that the word which occurs in the singular number, and which is rendered *river* in Isaiah viii. 7, is the same as that which occurs in the plural number, and which is rendered "floods" in Ps. xciii. 3. Moreover one of the epithets ("many" or *mighty*) of the "waters" of this river is the same as one of those of the "waters" of Ps. xciii. 4.

xxix. *vv.* 25—28 we find mention of three of the same instruments to which reference is made in this series of psalms, viz. the *nabla*, the harp, and the trumpets. "The words of David" (2 Chro. xxix. 30), in which Hezekiah "commanded the Levites to sing praises unto the Lord," may refer to Ps. xcvi. in its original form (cf. 1 Chro. xvi. 7).

Such being some of the grounds on which the date of the composition of these psalms may reasonably be assigned to the times of Isaiah, it is desirable to inquire further whether, in the absence of direct proof of the identity of authorship, there are such internal indications of originality as would lead us to assign the priority of composition to the prophecies or to the psalms.

Now it might fairly be urged in support of the theory that the Prophet borrowed from the Psalmist (1) that if the liturgical psalms of this series were composed during the first fourteen years of the reign of Hezekiah, they must have been anterior to the later prophecies of Isaiah, in which the larger part of the coincidences which have been noted appear; (2) that it is reasonable to suppose that when once the psalms in question had become a portion of the liturgical worship of the sanctuary, later writers should borrow from them both their ideas and their phraseology; and (3) that if, as some of our best modern critics believe, the passage which occurs almost verbatim in Micah iv. 1—4, and Isaiah ii. 2—5, is original in the case of the former writer, and borrowed by the contemporary prophet, there is a yet further presumption in favour of the originality of the Psalmist rather than of the Prophet in the present case.

On the other hand, it may be urged (1) that if the probability of the composition of the *liturgical* psalms of this series during the reign of Hezekiah be admitted, there are no decisive indications of their composition during the first fourteen years of that reign, and consequently, that there is no proof that Isaiah must have been acquainted with these psalms as portions of that temple-worship which had been recently restored; and (2) that the quotation of a particular passage from a contemporary prophet (if the priority of composition on the part of Micah be conceded) is no sufficient warrant for the supposition that Isaiah, the greatest, and perhaps the most original, of all the prophets, was indebted to the writer of a few lyrical poems for so much which is characteristic of the style and phraseology of both. In any case it may be urged with equal or greater force in favour of the originality of the Prophet, rather than of the Psalmist, that numerous quotations from the prophecies of Isaiah, or manifest allusions to them, are found both in the later psalms, and also in the later prophecies. The following will suffice by way of illustration:—

Ps. cii. 26, compared with Isai. l. 9, and li. 6.
Ps. ciii. 11, ,, Isai. lv. 9.
Ps. civ. 2, ,, Isai. xl. 22, and li. 13.
Ps. cv. 1, ,, Isai. xii. 4,
(where the whole of the verse is found verbatim.)
Ps. cvii. 23, compared with Isai. xlii. 10.
Ps. cvii. 33, 35, ,, Isai. xli. 18,
(where the same eight words occur verbatim, with the exception of a slight variation in the form of one of them. Cf. Isai. xxxv. 7.)
Ps. cxviii. 14, compared with Isai. xii. 2,
(where the whole of the verse occurs verbatim, with the addition of the word "Jehovah.")
Ps. cxviii. 28, compared with Isai. xxv. 1.
Ps. cxlvii. 4, 5, ,, Isai. xl. 26, 28.
Jer. vi. 20, ,, Isai. i. 11.
Jer. x. 4, ,, Isai. xl. 19, and xli. 7.
Jer. xii. 9, ,, Isai. lvi. 9.
Jer. xxxi. 35, ,, Isai. li. 15,
(where the same seven words occur verbatim.)
Jer. l. 8, compared with Isai. xlviii. 20, and lii. 11.
Nahum i. 15, ,, Isai. lii. 7,
(where the same six words occur verbatim.)
Mal. iii. 1, compared with Isai. xl. 3.

There seem, moreover, to be some positive indications that if Isaiah were not the writer of the psalms in question, the priority of authorship must have been on the part of the Prophet rather than on that of the Psalmist. The reign of Hezekiah is the *earliest* period to which the liturgical psalms of this series have been assigned with any degree of probability, whilst most modern critics assign to them a much later date; whereas some of the most remarkable coincidences of style and phraseology between this series of psalms and the prophecies of Isaiah are found in those portions of the prophecies which were composed previously to the accession of Hezekiah to the throne. It will suffice to allude to the characteristic use of *anadiplosis*, or iteration, in the earlier as well as in the

later prophecies[1], and also to the occurrence of the most remarkable of all the coincidences of phraseology, viz., the use of פצח *patsach*, not only in a signification peculiar to the Prophet and the Psalmist, but also in conjunction with רנה *rinnah* (see no. 9), in Isai. xiv. 7, the date of which prophecy appears to be positively determined by *v.* 28 of the same chapter. Other coincidences between this series of psalms and the *earlier* prophecies of Isaiah have been already noticed.

But in addition to the a priori improbability that the greatest of the Hebrew prophets should have been indebted to the contemporaneous, or nearly contemporaneous, writer of a few short lyrical poems, both for portions of the subject-matter of his great theme, and also for some of the most distinctive characteristics of his style and phraseology, there appears to be internal evidence in some of the coincidences which have been enumerated, if adoption, or imitation, on either side be admitted, that the prophecies were anterior to the psalms.

In the case of coincidence (2) *e.g.* we find that the figure of *clothing* pervades the two preceding chapters of the prophecies of Isaiah (cf. xlix. 18, l. 3, 9) as well as the preceding verses of chap. li., viz. *vv.* 6, 8, and that it is found also in the beginning of chap. lii.; and again in lix. 17, lxi. 3, 10, lxiii. 1, 2, 3, and lxiv. 6. Again, in the case of coincidence (9) we find the phrase peculiar to the Psalmist and the Prophet repeated by the latter six times in writings which, at the lowest computation, extend over a period of upwards of fifteen years, and probably over thirty years. Once more, in the case of coincidence (12), if the connection between Ps. xcix. and the vision recorded in Isai. vi. be more than accidental, the question of priority does not admit of doubt; inasmuch as whilst the recorded account of Isaiah's vision might well have become the groundwork of Ps. xcix., that psalm could not, by any possibility, have been the groundwork of the prophetic vision. The same inference may be fairly drawn from the existence in these psalms of that remarkable characteristic of the earlier as well as of the later writings of Isaiah to which allusion has already been made, viz., *anadiplosis* or iteration. When the character of both compositions is taken into account, and it is remembered that in the case of the prophet this distinctive characteristic is traced throughout writings which probably extended over upwards of half a century, it seems difficult to avoid the conclusion that if the psalms and the prophecies were not the productions of the same writer, and there be ground for supposing that there was imitation on either side, the originality in this, as in the other coincidences which have been noticed, must have been on the side of the Prophet and not on that of the Psalmist[2].

The general results of this inquiry may be briefly summed up in the following words:

(1) There seems good reason for assigning a common authorship to most, if not all, of the series of psalms beginning with the 91st, and ending with the 100th (more particularly to Pss. xciii. and xcv.—c.), and *possibly* to these psalms and to the prophecies of Isaiah.

(2) The Psalmist, if not identical with the prophet Isaiah, seems to have been largely indebted both to the earlier and later prophecies of Isaiah for his subject-matter, for the characteristics of his style, and for his phraseology.

(3) The date of the composition of these psalms seems to be approximately assigned, with the greatest amount of probability, to the times of Hezekiah, whose accession to the throne may have formed the historical groundwork of this remarkable revival of the regal prophecies, both in the writings of Isaiah and in this series of psalms. (See note on Ps. xciii. 1.) In any case there appear to be strong grounds for assigning to this series of psalms an earlier date than that of the captivity.

The bearing of these results, if established, upon the date of composition and the unity of authorship of the later, as well as the earlier, prophecies commonly ascribed to Isaiah is too obvious to require elucidation.

[1] *E.g.* "The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day," ii. *v.* 11; ib. *v.* 17; "When He ariseth to shake terribly the earth," ib. *v.* 19; ib. *v.* 21; "For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still," ix. *v.* 12; ib. *v.* 17. The occurrence of similar repetitions throughout chapters xl.—lxvi. scarcely needs illustration. The following instances from ch. xl. will suffice. (1) "Comfort ye, comfort ye," *v.* 1; (2) "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth," *v.* 7; "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth," *v.* 8; (3) "O Zion that bringest good tidings.... O Jerusalem that bringest good tidings," *v.* 9; (4) "Lift up thy voice, lift it up," ib.; (5) "To whom then will ye liken God?" *v.* 18; "To whom then will ye liken me?" *v.* 25.

[2] The following are instances of *anadiplosis* in this series of psalms; xcii. 9, xciii. 1, 3, xciv. 1, 3, 23, xcvi. 1, 2, 7, 8, 13, xcviii. 4, 5. Other instances might be added to the number, as *e.g.* the thrice-repeated refrain of Ps. xcix. 1, 5, 9. The occurrence of *anadiplosis* in other poetical portions of the Old Testament, as *e.g.* in the song of Deborah; in Pss. x. 9, and ciii. 1, 2, 22; and in the refrain of some other of the psalms, as *e.g.* Pss. xlii., xlvi., lvii., lxxx., cvii., and cxxxvi., is not sufficiently common to neutralize the force of this coincidence.

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